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FROM

Mrs. Franklin Q. Brown

By Duncan Edmonstone Ferrier

MARRIAGE.

A Novel.

BY THE AUTHOR OF THE INHERITANCE.

"Life consists not of a series of illustrious actions; the greater part of our time passes in compliance with necessities—in the performance of daily duties—in the removal of small inconveniences—in the procurement of petty pleasures; and we are well or ill at ease, as the main stream of life glides on smoothly, or is ruffled by small and frequent interruption."

JOHNSON.

THREE VOLUMES IN TWO.

VOL. I.

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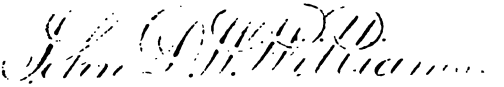

———"Cato did well reprove Alus Albinus for writing the Roman story in the Greek tongue, of which he had but imperfect knowledge; and himself was put to make his apology for so doing: Cato told him that he was mightily in love with a fault, that he had rather beg a pardon than be innocent. Who forced him to need the pardon?"

JEREMY TAYLOR.

"There remains behind, not only a large harvest, but labourers capable of gathering it in. More than one writer has of late displayed talents of this description; and if the present Author, himself a phantom, may be permitted to distinguish a brother, or perhaps a sister shadow, he would mention, in particular, the Author of the very lively work, entitled 'MARRIAGE.'" *Conclusion of "Tales of My Landlord."*

"The author of this work has done things which once done are not likely to be forgotten—She, for there can be no doubt at all of the sex of the writer—has added new *characters* to the stock, Dr. Redgill, Mrs. Violet M'Shake, and the three Aunts, are new beings summoned into effectual existence. Their various minds, bodies, moods, foibles, frailties, absurdities, have been drawn with boldness, and the ease of a masterly and self-confiding pencil; and the Author, who has really enlarged the territory of fiction, by stories drawn from such observation or such imagination, as these characters display, has taken possession of a place from which dislodgment is not easy.

"The author of these works ('*The Inheritance*, and '*Marriage*,') is evidently a female, and as evidently one that has had abundant opportunities of observing society in a great variety of its walks.—Add to this a keen relish for the ridiculous—a profound veneration for the virtuous—a taste in composition extremely chaste, simple, unaffected—and perhaps the literary character of this lady has been sufficiently outlined. She has much in common with the other great authoresses of her time, but she has also much to distinguish her from them. She unites the perfect purity and moral elevation of mind visible in all Miss Baillie's delightful works, with much of the same caustic vigour of satire, that has made Miss Edgeworth's pen almost as fearful as fascinating." *Blackwood's Magazine.*

MARRIAGE.

CHAPTER I.

Love!—"A word by superstition thought a God; by use turned to an humour; by self-will made a flattering madness."
Alexander & Campaspe.

"COME hither, child," said the old Earl of Courtland to his daughter, as, in obedience to his summons, she entered his study; "come hither, I say; I wish to have some serious conversation with you; so dismiss your dogs, shut the door, and sit down here."

Lady Juliana rang for the footman to take Venus; bade Pluto be quiet, like a darling, under the sofa; and, taking Cupid in her arms, assured his Lordship he need fear no disturbance from the sweet creatures, and that she would be all attention to his commands—kissing her cherished pug as she spoke.

"You are now, I think, seventeen, Juliana," said his Lordship, in a solemn important tone.

"And a half, papa."

"It is therefore time you should be thinking of establishing yourself in the world. Have you ever turned your thoughts that way?"

Lady Juliana cast down her beautiful eyes, and was silent.

"As I can give you no fortune," continued the Earl, swelling with ill suppressed importance, as he

proceeded, "you have perhaps no great pretensions to a very brilliant establishment."

"Oh! none in the world, papa," eagerly interrupted Lady Juliana; "a mere competence with the man of my heart."

"The man of a fiddlestick!" exclaimed Lord Courtland in a fury; "what the devil have you to do with a heart, I should like to know! There's no talking to a young woman now about marriage, but she is all in a blaze about hearts, and darts, and—and But hark ye, child, I'll suffer no daughter of mine to play the fool with her heart, indeed! She shall marry for the purpose for which matrimony was ordained amongst people of birth—that is, for the aggrandisement of her family, the extending of their political influence—for becoming, in short, the depository of their mutual interest. These are the only purposes for which persons of rank ever think of marriage. And pray what has your heart to say to that?"

"Nothing, papa," replied Lady Juliana, in a faint dejected tone of voice. "Have done, Cupid," addressing her favourite, who was amusing himself in pulling and tearing the beautiful lace veil that partly shaded the head of his fair mistress.

"I thought not," resumed the Earl, in a triumphant tone—"I thought not indeed." And as this victory over his daughter put him in unusual good humour, he condescended to sport a little with her curiosity.

"And pray, can this wonderful wise heart of yours inform you, who it is you are going to obtain for a husband?"

Had Lady Juliana dared to utter the wishes of that heart, she would have been at no loss for a reply; but she saw the necessity of dissimulation; and after naming such of her admirers as were most indifferent to her, she declared herself quite at a loss, and begged her father to put an end to her suspense.

"Now, what would you think of the Duke of L——?" asked the Earl, in a voice of half smothered exultation and delight.

"The Duke of L——!" repeated Lady Juliana, with a scream of horror and surprise; surely, papa, you cannot be serious: why, he's red haired and squints, and he's as old as you."

"If he were as old as the devil, and as ugly too," interrupted the enraged Earl, "he should be your husband, and may I perish if you shall have any other!"

The youthful beauty burst into tears, while her father traversed the apartment with an inflamed and wrathful visage.

"If it had been any body but that odious Duke—" sobbed the lovely Juliana.

"If it had been any body but that odious Duke!" repeated the Earl, mimicking her, "they should not have had you. It has been my sole study, ever since I saw your brother settled, to bring about this alliance; and, when this is accomplished, my utmost ambition will be satisfied. So no more whining—the affair is settled; and all that remains for you to do, is to study to make yourself agreeable to his Grace, and to sign the settlements. No such mighty sacrifice, methinks, when repaid with a ducal coronet, the most splendid jewels, the finest equipages, and the largest jointure of any woman in England."

Lady Juliana raised her head, and wiped her eyes. Lord Courtland perceived the effect his eloquence had produced upon the childish fancy of his daughter, and continued to expatiate upon the splendid joys that awaited her, in an union with a nobleman of the Duke's rank and fortune; till at length, dazzled, if not convinced, she declared herself "satisfied that it was her duty to marry whoever papa pleased; but—" and a sigh escaped her, as she contrasted her noble suitor with her handsome lover—"but if I

yet it certainly was deficient in a certain air—*a je ne sçais quoi*—that marks the man of fashion.

"How I wish I had my pretty Cupid here," said her Ladyship with a sigh one day as she lolled on a sofa: "he had so many pretty tricks, he would have helped to amuse us, and make the time pass; for really this place grows very stupid and tiresome; don't you think so, love?"

"Most confoundedly so, my darling," replied her husband, yawning sympathetically as he spoke.

"Then suppose I make one more attempt to soften papa, and be received into favour again?"

"With all my heart."

"Shall I say, I'm very sorry for what I have done?" asked her Ladyship with a sigh: "You know I did not say that in my first letter."

"Aye, do; and, if it will serve any purpose, you may say that I am no less so."

In a few days the letter was returned, in a blank cover; and, by the same post, Douglas, saw himself superseded in the Gazette, being absent without leave!

There now remained but one course to pursue; and that was to seek refuge at his father's in the Highlands of Scotland. At the first mention of it, Lady Juliana was transported with joy; and begged that a letter might be instantly despatched, containing the offer of a visit: she had heard the Duchess of M. declare nothing could be so delightful as the style of living in Scotland: the people were so frank and gay, and the manners so easy and engaging: Oh! it was delightful! and then Lady Jane G. and Lady Mary L. and a thousand other Lords and Ladies she knew, were all so charmed with the country, and all so sorry to leave it. Then dear Henry's family must be so charming: an old castle, too, was her delight: she would feel quite at home while wandering through its long galleries; and she quite loved old pictures, and armour, and tapestry; and then her

thoughts reverted to her father's magnificent mansion in D——shire.

At length an answer arrived, containing a cordial invitation from the old Laird, to spend the winter with them at Glenfern Castle.

All impatience to quit the scenes of their short-lived felicity, they bade a hasty adieu to the now fading beauties of Windermere; and full of hope and expectation, eagerly turned towards the bleak hills of Scotland. They stopped for a short time at Edinburgh, to provide themselves with a carriage, and some other necessaries. There, too, she fortunately met with an English Abigail and footman, who, for double wages, were prevailed upon to attend her to the Highlands; which, with the addition of two dogs, a tame squirrel, and mackaw, completed the establishment.

CHAPTER II.

"What transport to retrace our early plays,
Our easy bliss, when each thing joy supplied;
The woods, the mountains, and the warbling maze
Of the wild brooks."

THOMPSON.

MANY were the dreary muirs, and rugged mountains, her Ladyship had to encounter, in her progress to Glenfern Castle; and, but for the hope of the new world that awaited her beyond those formidable barriers, her delicate frame, and still more sensitive feelings, must have sunk beneath the horrors of such a journey. But she remembered the Duchess had said, the inns and roads were execrable; and the face of the country, as well as the lower orders of people, frightful; but what signified those things? There were balls, and sailing parties, and rowing matches, and shooting parties, and fishing parties, and parties of every description; and the certainty of being recompensed by the festivities of Glenfern Castle, reconciled her to the ruggedness of the approach.

Douglas had left his paternal home and native hills, when only eight years of age. A rich relation of his mother's, happening to visit them at that time, took a fancy to the boy; and, under promise of making him his heir, had prevailed on his parents to part with him. At a proper age he was placed in the guards, and had continued to maintain himself in the favour of his benefactor until his imprudent marriage, which had irritated this old batchelor so much, that he instantly disinherited him, and refused to listen to any terms of reconciliation. The impressions which the scenes of his infancy had left

upon the mind of the young Scotsman, it may easily be supposed, were of a pleasing description. He expatiated to his Juliana on the wild but august scenery that surrounded his father's castle, and associated with the idea, the boyish exploits, which, though faintly remembered, still served to endear them to his heart. He spoke of the time when he used to make one of a numerous party on the lake, and, when tired of sailing on its glassy surface, to the sound of soft music, they would land at some lovely spot, and after partaking of their banquet beneath a spreading tree, conclude the day by a dance on the grass.

Lady Juliana would exclaim, "How delightful! I doat upon pic-nics and dancing!—apropos, Henry, there will surely be a ball to welcome our arrival?"

The conversation was interrupted; for just at that moment they had gained the summit of a very high hill, and the post-boy stopping to give his horses breath, turned round to the carriage, pointing at the same time with a significant gesture, to a tall thin gray house, something resembling a tower, that stood in the vale beneath. A small sullen looking lake was in front, on whose banks grew neither tree nor shrub. Behind rose a chain of rugged cloud-capped hills, on the declivities of which were some faint attempts at young plantations; and the only level ground consisted of a few dingy turnip fields, enclosed with stone walls, or dykes, as the post-boy called them. It was now November; the day was raw and cold; and a thick drizzling rain was beginning to fall. A dreary stillness reigned all around, broken only at intervals by the screams of the sea-fowl that hovered over the lake; on whose dark and troubled waters was dimly descried a little boat, plied by one solitary being.

"What a scene!" at length Lady Juliana exclaimed, shuddering as she spoke; Good God, what a scene! how I pity the unhappy wretches who are

doomed to dwell in such a place! and yonder hideous grim house; it makes me sick to look at it. For heaven's sake, bid him drive on." Another significant look from the driver made the colour mount to Douglas' cheek, as he stammered out, "Surely it can't be; yet somehow I don't know. Pray, my lad," letting down one of the glasses and addressing the post-boy, "what is the name of that house?"

"Hoose! repeated the driver; "ca' ye thon a hoose' thon's gude Glenfern castle."

Lady Juliana not understanding a word he said, sat silently, wondering at her husband's curiosity respecting such a wretched looking place.

"Impossible! you must be mistaken, my lad: why, what's become of all the fine wood that used to surround it?"

"Gin you mean a wheen auld firs, there's some o' them to the fore yet," pointing to two or three tall, bare, scathed Scotch firs, that scarcely bent their stubborn heads to the wind, that now began to howl around them.

"I insist upon it that you are mistaken; you must have wandered from the right road," cried the now alarmed Douglas in a loud voice, which vainly attempted to conceal his agitation.

"We'll shune see that," replied the phlegmatic Scot, who having rested his horses, and affixed a drag to the wheel, was about to proceed; when Lady Juliana, who now began to have some vague suspicion of the truth, called to him to stop; and almost breathless with alarm, inquired of her husband the meaning of what had passed.

He tried to force a smile, as he said, "It seems our journey is nearly ended; that fellow persists in asserting that that is Glenfern, though I can scarcely think it. If it is, it is strangely altered since I left it twelve years ago."

For a moment Lady Juliana was too much alarmed to make a reply; pale and speechless she sunk

back in the carriage; but the motion of it, as it began to proceed, roused her to a sense of her situation, and she burst into tears and exclamations.

The driver, who attributed it all to fears at descending the hill, assured her "she need na be the least feared, for there were na twa cannier beasts atween that and Johnny Groat's hoose; and that they wad hae her at the castle door in a crack, gin they were ance down the brae."

Douglas' attempts to soothe his high born bride were not more successful than those of the driver: in vain he made use of every endearing epithet and tender expression, and recalled the time when she used to declare that she could dwell with him in a desert; her only replies were bitter reproaches and upbraidings for his treachery and deceit, mingled with floods of tears, and interrupted by hysterical sobs. Provoked at her folly, yet softened by her extreme distress, Douglas was in the utmost state of perplexity—now ready to give way to a paroxysm of rage; then yielding to the natural goodness of his heart, he sought to soothe her into composure; and, at length, with much difficulty succeeded in changing her passionate indignation into silent dejection.

That no fresh objects of horror or disgust might appear to disturb this calm, the blinds were pulled down, and in this state they reached Glenfern Castle. But there the friendly veil was necessarily withdrawn, and the first object that presented itself to the high-bred Englishwoman, was an old man clad in a short tartan coat and striped woollen night-cap, with blear eyes and shaking hands, who vainly strove to open the carriage door.

Douglas soon extricated himself, and assisted his lady to alight; then accosting the venerable domestic as "Old Donald," asked him, if he recollected him?

"Weel that, weel that, Maister Hairy, and ye're

welcome hame; and ye tu, bonny Sir,* (addressing Lady Juliana, who was calling to her footman to follow her with the mackaw;) then tottering before them, he led the way, while her ladyship followed leaning on her husband, her squirrel on her other arm, preceded by her dogs, barking with all their might, and attended by the mackaw, screaming with all his strength; and in this state was the Lady Juliana ushered into the drawing room of Glenfern Castle!

* The Highlanders use this term of respect indifferently to both sexes.

CHAPTER III.

——————"What can be worse,
Than to dwell here."

Paradise Lost.

It was a long, narrow, low-roofed room, with a number of small windows, that admitted feeble lights in every possible direction. The scanty furniture bore every appearance of having been constructed at the same time as the edifice; and the friendship thus early formed still seemed to subsist, as the high-backed worked chairs adhered most pertinaciously to the gray walls, on which hung, in narrow black frames, some of the venerable ancestors of the Douglas family. A fire, which appeared to have been newly kindled, was beginning to burn, but, previous to showing itself in flame, had chosen to vent itself in smoke, with which the room was completely filled, and the open windows seemed to produce no other effect than that of admitting the rain and wind.

At the entrance of the strangers, a flock of females rushed forwards to meet them. Douglas good humouredly submitted to be hugged by three long chinned spinsters, whom he recognized as his aunts; and warmly saluted five awkward purple girls he guessed to be his sisters; while Lady Juliana stood the image of despair, and, scarcely conscious, admitted in silence the civilities of her new relations; till, at length, sinking into a chair, she endeavoured to conceal her agitation by calling to the dogs, and caressing her mackaw.

The Laird, who had been hastily summoned from his farming operations, now entered. He was

a good looking old man, with something the air of a gentleman, in spite of the inelegance of his dress, his rough manner, and provincial accent. After warmly welcoming his son, he advanced to his beautiful daughter-in-law, and, taking her in his arms, bestowed a loud and hearty kiss on each cheek; then, observing the paleness of her complexion, and the tears that swam in her eyes, "What! not frightened for our Hieland hills, my leddy? Come, cheer up—trust me, ye'll find as warm hearts among them, as ony ye hae left in your fine English *policies*"—shaking her delicate fingers in his hard muscular gripe, as he spoke.

The tears, which had with difficulty been hitherto suppressed, now burst in torrents from the eyes of the high-bred beauty, as she leant her cheek against the back of a chair, and gave way to the anguish which mocked control.

To the loud, anxious inquiries, and oppressive kindness of her homely relatives, she made no reply; but, stretching out her hands to her husband, sobbed, "take, oh! take me from this place!"

Mortified, ashamed, and provoked, at a behaviour so childish and absurd, Douglas could only stammer out something about Lady Juliana having been frightened and fatigued; and, requesting to be shown to their apartment, he supported her almost lifeless to it, while his aunts followed, all three prescribing different remedies in a breath.

"For heaven's sake, take them from me!" faintly articulated Lady Juliana, as she shrank from the many hands that were alternately applied to her pulse and forehead.

After repeated entreaties and plausible excuses from Douglas, his aunts at length consented to withdraw, and he then exerted all the rhetoric he was master of, to reconcile his bride to the situation love and necessity had thrown her into. But in vain he employed reasoning, caresses, and threats;

the only answers he could extort were tears and entreaties to be taken from a place, where she declared she felt it impossible to exist.

"If you wish my death, Harry," said she, in a voice almost inarticulate from excess of weeping, "Oh! kill me quickly, and do not leave me to linger out my days, and perish at last with misery here."

"For heaven's sake, tell me what you would have me do," said her husband, softened to pity by her extreme distress, "and I swear, that, in every thing possible, I will comply with your wishes."

"O, fly then, stop the horses, and let us return immediately. Do run, dearest Harry, or they will be gone; and we shall never get away from this odious place."

"Where would you go?" asked he, with affected calmness.

"Oh, any where; no matter where, so as we do but get away from hence: we can be at no loss.

"None in the world," interrupted Douglas, with a bitter smile, "as long as there is a prison to receive us. See," continued he, throwing a few shillings down on the table, "there is every sixpence I possess in the world, so help me heaven!"

Lady Juliana stood aghast.

At that instant, the English Abigail burst into the room: and in a voice, choaking with passion, she requested her discharge, that she might return with the driver who had brought them there.

"A pretty way of travelling, to be sure, it will be," continued she, "to go bumping behind a dirty chaise-driver; but better to be shook to a jelly altogether, than stay amongst such a set of *Oaten-toads**."

* Hottentots.

"What do you mean?" inquired Douglas, as soon as the voluble Abigail allowed him an opportunity of asking.

"Why, my meaning, Sir, is to leave this here place immediately; not that I have any objections, either to my Lady, or you, Sir; but, to be sure, it was a sad day for me, that I engaged myself to her Ladyship. Little did I think, that a Lady of distinction would be coming to such a poor pitiful place as this. I am sure, I thought I should ha' swooned, when I was showed the hole where I was to sleep."

At the bare idea of this indignity to her person, the fury of the incensed fair one blazed forth with such strength, as to choke her utterance.

Amazement had hitherto kept Lady Juliana silent; for to such scenes she was a stranger. Born in an elevated rank; reared in state; accustomed to the most obsequious attention; and never approached, but with the respect due rather to a *divinity* than to a mortal, the strain of vulgar insolence that now assailed her, was no less new to her ears, than shocking to her feelings. With a voice and look, that awed the woman into obedience, she commanded her to quit her presence for ever; and then, no longer able to suppress the emotions of insulted pride, wounded vanity, and indignant disappointment, she gave way to a violent fit of hysterics.

In the utmost perplexity, the unfortunate husband, by turns, cursed the hour that had given him such a wife; now tried to soothe her into composure; but at length, seriously alarmed at the increasing attack, he called loudly for assistance.

In a moment, the three aunts, and the five sisters all rushed together into the room, full of wonder, exclamation, and inquiry. Many were the remedies that were tried, and the experiments that were suggested; and, at length, the violence of passion exhausted itself, and a faint sob, or deep sigh, succeeded the hysteric scream.

Douglas now attempted to account for the behaviour of his noble spouse, by ascribing it to the fatigue she had lately undergone, joined to distress of mind at her father's unrelenting severity towards her.

"Oh, the amiable creature!" interrupted the unsuspecting spinsters, almost stifling her with their caresses as they spoke. "Welcome, a thousand times welcome, to Glenfern Castle," said Miss Jacky, who was esteemed by much the most sensible woman, as well as the greatest orator in the whole parish; "nothing shall be wanting, dearest Lady Juliana, to compensate for a parent's rigour, and make you happy and comfortable. Consider this as your future home! My sisters and myself will be as mothers to you; and see these charming young creatures," dragging forward two tall frightened girls, with sandy hair and great purple arms; "thank Providence for having blest you with such sisters!" "Don't speak too much, Jacky, to our dear niece at present, said Miss Grizzy; "I think one of Lady Maclaughlan's composing draughts would be the best thing for her."

"Composing draughts at this time of day!" cried Miss Nicky; "I should think a little good broth a much wiser thing. There are some excellent family broth making below, and I'll desire Tibby to bring a few."

"Will you take a little soup, love?" asked Douglas. His Lady assented; and Miss Nicky vanished, but quickly re-entered, followed by Tibby, carrying a huge bowl of coarse Scotch broth, swimming with leeks, greens, and grease. Lady Juliana attempted to taste it; but her delicate palate revolted at the homely fare: and she gave up the attempt, in spite of Miss Nicky's earnest entreaties to take a few more of these excellent family broth.

"I should think," said Henry, as he vainly at-

tempted to stir it round, "that a little wine would be more to the purpose than this stuff."

The aunts looked at each other; and, withdrawing to a corner, a whispering consultation took place, in which Lady Maclaughlan's opinion, "birch, balm, currant, heating, cooling, running risks," &c. &c. transpired. At length the question was carried; and some tolerable Sherry, and a piece of very substantial *short-bread*, were produced.

It was now voted by Miss Jacky, and carried *nem. con.* that her Ladyship ought to take a little repose till the hour of dinner.

"And don't trouble to dress," continued the considerate aunt, "for we are not very dressy here; and we are to be quite a charming family party, nobody but ourselves; and," turning to her nephew, "your brother and his wife. She is a most superior woman, though she has rather too many of her English prejudices yet to be all we could wish; but I have no doubt, when she has lived a little longer amongst us, she will just become one of ourselves."

"I forget who she was?" said Douglas.

"A grand-daughter of Sir Duncan Malcolm's a very old family of the ——— blood, and nearly allied to the present Earl. And here they come," exclaimed she, on hearing the sound of a carriage; and all rushed out to receive them.

"Let us have a glimpse of this scion from a noble stock," said Lady Juliana, mimicking the accent of the poor spinsters, as she rose and ran to the window.

"Good heavens, Henry! do come and behold this equipage;" and she laughed with childish glee, as she pointed to a plain, old fashioned whisky, with a large top. A tall handsome young man now alighted, and lifted out a female figure, so enveloped in a cloak, that eyes less penetrating than Lady Juliana's, could not, at a single glance, have discovered her to be a "frightful quiz."

"Only conceive the effect of this dashing equipage in Bond-street!" continued she, redoubling her mirth at the bright idea; then suddenly stopping, and sighing—"Ah, my pretty vis-a-vis! I remember the first time I saw you, Henry, I was in it at a review;" and she sighed still deeper.

"True; I was then aid-de-camp to your handsome lover, the Duke of L——."

"Perhaps I might think him handsome now. People's taste alter according to circumstances."

"Yours must have undergone a wonderful revolution, if you can find charms in a hunchback of fifty-three."

"He is not a hunchback," returned her Ladyship warmly; "only a little high shouldered; but, at any rate, he has the most beautiful place, and the finest house in England."

Douglas saw the storm gathering on the brow of his capricious wife, and clasping her in his arms, "Are you, indeed, so changed, my Julia, that you have forgot the time when you used to declare, you would prefer a desert with your Henry, to a throne with another."

"No, certainly, not changed, but—I—I did not very well know then what a desert was; or, at least, I had formed rather a different idea of it."

"What was your idea of a desert?" said her husband, laughing; "do tell me, love?"

"Oh! I had fancied it a beautiful place, full of roses and myrtles, and smooth green turf, and murmuring rivulets, and, though very retired, not absolutely out of the world; where one could occasionally see one's friends, and give *dejeunés et fetes champetres.*"

"Well, perhaps the time may come, Juliana, when we may realize your Elysian deserts; but at present, you know, I am wholly dependent on my father. I hope to prevail on him to do something

for me: and that our stay here will be short; as, you may be sure, the moment I can, I will take you hence. I am sensible it is not a situation for you; but for my sake, dearest Juliana, bear with it for a while, without betraying your disgust. Will you do this, darling?" and he kissed away the sullen tear that hung on her cheek.

"You know, love, there's nothing in the world I wou'dnt do for you," replied she, as she played with her squirrel; "and as you promise our stay shall be short, if I don't die of the horrors, I shall certainly try to make the time agreeable. Oh! my cherub!" flying to her pug, who came barking into the room, "Where have you been, and where's my darling Psyche, and sweet mackaw? Do, Harry, go and see after the darlings."

"I must go and see my brother and his wife first. Will you come, love?"

"O, not now; I don't feel equal to the encounter; besides, I must dress. But what shall I do; since that vile woman's gone, I can't dress myself. I never did such a thing in my life; and I am sure, its impossible that I can," almost weeping at the hardships she was doomed to experience in making her own toilette.

"Shall I be your Abigail?" asked her husband, smiling at the distress; "methinks it would be no difficult task to deck my Julia."

"Dear Harry, will you really dress me? Oh! that will be delightful! I shall die with laughing at your awkwardness;" and her beautiful eyes sparkled with childish delight at the idea.

"In the mean time," said Douglas, "I'll send some one to unpack your things; and after I have shook hands with Archie, and been introduced to my new sister, I shall enter on my office."

"Now do, pray, make haste; for I die to see your great hands tying strings, and sticking pins."

Delighted with her gaiety and good humour, he left her caressing her favourites; and finding rather a scarcity of female attendance, he despatched two of his sisters, to assist his helpless beauty in her arrangements.

CHAPTER IV.

"And ever against eating cares,
Lap me in soft Lydian airs."

L'Allegro.

When Douglas returned, he found the floor strewed with dresses of every description, his sisters on their knees before a great trunk, they were busied in unpacking, and his Lady in her wrapper, with her hair about her ears, still amusing herself with her pets.

"See, how good your sisters are," said she, pointing to the poor girls, whose inflamed faces bore testimony to their labours. "I declare I am quite sorry to see them take so much trouble," yawning as she leant back in her chair; "is it not quite shocking, Tommy?" kissing her squirrel. "Oh! pray, Henry, do tell me, what I am to put on, for I protest I don't know. Favolle always used to choose for me; and so did that odious Martin, for she had an exquisite taste."

"Not so exquisite as your own, I am sure; so for once choose for yourself," replied the good-humoured husband; "and pray make haste, for my father waits dinner."

Betwixt scolding, laughing, and blundering, the dress was at length completed; and Lady Juliana, in all the pomp of dress and pride of beauty, descended, leaning on her husband's arm.

On entering the drawing-room, which was now in a more comfortable state, Douglas led her to a lady who was sitting by the fire, and placing her hand within that of the stranger, "Juliana, my

love," said he, "this is a sister whom you have not yet seen, and with whom I am sure you will gladly make acquaintance."

The stranger received her noble sister with graceful ease; and, with a sweet smile and pleasing accent, expressed herself happy in the introduction. Lady Juliana was surprised and somewhat disconcerted. She had arranged her plans and made up her mind to be *condescending;* she had resolved to enchant by her sweetness, dazzle by her brilliancy, and overpower by her affability. But there was a simple dignity in the air and address of the lady, before which even high-bred affectation sunk abashed. Before she found a reply to the courteous, yet respectful salutation of her sister-in-law, Douglas introduced his brother; and the old gentleman, impatient at any further delay, taking Juliana by the hand, pulled, rather than led her into the dining-room.

Even Lady Juliana contrived to make a meal of the roast mutton and moorfowl; for the Laird piqued himself on the breed of his sheep, and his son was too good a sportsman to allow his friends to want for game.

"I think my darling Tommy would relish this grouse very much," observed Lady Juliana, as she secured the last remaining wing for her favourite; "bring him here!" turning to the tall, dashing lackquey who stood behind her chair, and whose handsome livery, and well dressed hair, formed a striking contrast to old Donald's tartan jacket and bob-wig.

"Come hither, my sweetest cherubs!" extending her arms towards the charming *trio*, as they entered, barking, and chattering, and flying to their mistress. A scene of noise and nonsense ensued.

Douglas remained silent, mortified and provoked at the weakness of his wife, which not even the silver tones of her voice, or the elegance of her manners, could longer conceal from him. But still

there was a charm in her very folly, to the eye of love, which had not yet wholly lost its power.

After the table was cleared, observing that he was still silent and abstracted, Lady Juliana turned to her husband, and, laying her hand on his shoulder, "You are not well, love!" said she, looking up in his face, and shaking back the redundant ringlets that shaded her own.

"Perfectly so," replied her husband, with a sigh.

"What, dull; then I must sing to enliven you." And, leaning her head on his shoulder, she warbled a verse of the beautiful little Venetian air, *La Biondina in Gondoletta.* Then suddenly stopping, and fixing her eyes on Mrs. Douglas, "I beg pardon, perhaps you don't like music; perhaps my singing's a bore."

"You pay us a bad compliment in saying so," said her sister-in-law, smiling; "and the only atonement you can make for such an injurious doubt, is to proceed."

"Does any body sing here?" asked she, without noticing this request: "Do, somebody, sing me a song."

"O! we all sing and dance too," said one of the old young ladies; "and after tea we will show you some of our Scotch steps; but, in the mean time, Mrs. Douglas will favour us with her song."

Mrs. Douglas assented good-humouredly, though aware that it would be rather a niee point to please all parties in the choice of a song. The Laird reckoned all foreign music, *i. e.* every thing that was not Scotch, an outrage upon his ears; and Mrs. Douglas had too much taste to murder Scotch songs with her English accent. She therefore compromised the matter as well as she could, by selecting a Highland ditty clothed in her own native tongue; and sung, with much pathos and simplicity, the lamented Leyden's "Fall of Macgregor."

"In the vale of Glenorchy the night breeze was sighing
O'er the tomb where the ancient Macgregors are lying;
Green are their graves by their soft murmuring river,
But the name of Macgregor has perished forever.

"On a red stream of light, by his gray mountains glancing,
Soon I beheld a dim spirit advancing;
Slow o'er the heath of the dead was its motion,
Like the shadow of mist o'er the foam of the ocean.

"Like the sound of a stream through the still evening dying—
Stranger! who treads where Macgregor is lying?
Darest thou to walk, unappalled and firm-hearted,
'Mid the shadowy steps of the mighty departed?

"See! round thee the caves of the dead are disclosing
The shades that have long been in silence reposing;
Through their forms dimly twinkles the moon-beam descending,
As upon thee their red eyes of wrath they are bending.

"Our gray stones of fame though the heath-blossom cover,
Round the fields of our battles our spirits shall hover;
Where we oft saw the streams running red from the mountains;
But dark are our forms by our blue native fountains.

"For our fame melts away like the foam of the river,
Like the last yellow leaves on the oak-boughs that shiver;
The name is unknown of our fathers so gallant,
And our blood beats no more in the breasts of the valiant.

"The hunter of red deer now ceases to number
The lonely gray stones on the field of our slumber.—
Fly, stranger! and let not thine eye be reverted;
Why should'st thou see that our fame is departed?"

"Pray, do you play on the harp?" asked the volatile lady, scarcely waiting till the first stanza was ended; "and, apropos, have you a good harp here?"

"We've a very sweet spinnet," said Miss Jacky, "which, in my opinion, is a far superior instrument: and Bella will give us a tune upon it. Bella, my dear, let Lady Juliana hear how well you can play."

Bella, blushing like a piony rose, retired to a corner of the room, where stood the spinnet; and with

great, heavy, trembling hands, began to belabour the unfortunate instrument, while the aunts beat time, and encouraged her to proceed, with exclamations of admiration and applause.

"You have done very well, Bella," said Mrs. Douglas, seeing her preparing to *execute* another piece, and pitying the poor girl, as well as her auditors. Then whispering Miss Jacky that Lady Juliana looked fatigued, they arose to quit the room.

"Give me your arm love, to the drawing-room," said her Ladyship, languidly. "And now, pray, don't be long away," continued she, as he placed her on the sofa, and returned to the gentlemen.

CHAPTER V.

"You have displaced the mirth, broke the good meeting,
With most admired disorder."

Macbeth.

THE interval, which seemed of endless duration to the hapless Lady Juliana, was passed by the aunts in giving sage counsel as to the course of life to be pursued by married ladies. Worsted stockings and quilted petticoats were insisted upon as indispensable articles of dress; while it was plainly insinuated, that it was utterly impossible any child could be healthy, whose mother had not confined her wishes to barley broth and oatmeal porridge.

"Only look at thae young lambs," said Miss Grizzy, pointing to the five great girls; "see what pickters of health they are! I'm sure I hope my dear niece, your children will be just the same—only boys, for we are sadly in want of boys. It's melancholy to think we have not a boy among us, and that a fine ancient race like ours should be dying away for want of male heirs." And the tears streamed down the cheeks of the good spinster as she spoke.

The entrance of the gentlemen put a stop to the conversation.

Flying to her husband, Lady Juliana began to whisper, in very audible tones, her inquiries, whether he had yet got any money—when they were to go away, &c. &c.

"Does your Ladyship choose any tea?" asked Miss Nicky, as she disseminated the little cups of coarse black liquid.

"Tea! oh no, I never drink tea—I'll take some coffee though; and Psyche doats on a dish of tea."—And she tendered the beverage, that had been intended for herself, to her favourite.

"Here's no coffee," said Douglas, surveying the tea-table; "but I will ring for some," as he pulled the bell.

Old Donald answered the summons.

"Where's the coffee?" demanded Miss Nicky.

"The coffee!" repeated the Highlander; "troth, Miss Nicky, an' its been clean forgot."

"Well, but you can get it yet?" said Douglas.

"'Deed, Maister Harry, the night's owre far gane for't noo; for the fire's a' ta'en up, ye see," reckoning with his fingers, as he proceeded; "there's parritch makin' for oor supper; and there's patatees boiling for the beasts; and—"

"I'll see about it myself," said Miss Nicky, leaving the room, with old Donald at her back, muttering all the way.

The old Laird, all this while, had been enjoying his evening nap; but, that now ended, and the tea equipage being dismissed, starting up, he asked what they were about, that the dancing was not begun.

"Come, my Leddy, we'll set the example," snapping his fingers, and singing in a hoarse voice,

> "The mouse is a merry beastie,
> And the moudiwort wants the een;
> But folks shall ne'er get wit,
> Sae merry as we twa ha'e been.

"But whar's the girlies?" cried he; "Ho! Belle, Becky, Betty, Baby, Beeny—to your posts!"

The young ladies, eager for the delights of music and dancing, now entered, followed by Coil, the piper, dressed in the native garb, with cheeks seemingly ready blown for the occasion. After a little strutting and puffing, the pipes were fairly set agoing in Coil's most spirited manner. But vain would be

the attempt to describe Lady Juliana's horror and amazement at the hideous sounds that for the first time assailed her ear. Tearing herself from the grasp of the old gentleman, who was just setting off in the reel, she flew shrieking to her husband, and threw herself trembling into his arms, while he called loudly to the self-delighted Coil to stop.

"What's the matter—what's the matter?" cried the whole family, gathering round.

"Matter!" repeated Douglas furiously, "you have frightened Lady Juliana to death with your infernal music. What did you mean," turning fiercely to the astonished piper, "by blowing that confounded bladder?"

Poor Coil gaped with astonishment; for never before had his performance on the bagpipe been heard but with admiration and applause.

"A bonny bargain, indeed, that canna stand to pipes," said the old gentleman, as he went puffing up and down the room; "She's no the wife for a Heelandman. Confoonded blather indeed! By my faith, ye're no blate!"

"I declare it's the most distressing thing I ever met with," sighed Miss Grizzy; "I wonder whether it could be the sight or the sound of the bagpipe that frightened our dear niece. I wish to goodness Lady Maclaughlan was here!"

It's impossible the bagpipe could frighten any body," said Miss Jacky, in a high key, "nobody with common sense could be frightened at a bagpipe.

Mrs. Douglas here mildly interposed, and soothed down the offended pride of the Highlanders, by attributing Lady Juliana's agitation entirely to *surprise.* The word operated like a charm; all were ready to admit, that it was a surprising thing when heard for the first time. Miss Jacky remarked, that we all liable to be surprised; and the still more sapient Grizzy said, that indeed it was most surpris-

ing the effect that surprise had upon some people. For her own part, she could not deny, but that she was very often frightened when she was surprised.

Douglas, meanwhile, was employed in soothing the terrors, real or affected, of his delicate bride; who declared herself so exhausted with the fatigue she had undergone, and the sufferings she had endured, that she must retire for the night. Henry, eager to escape from the questions and remarks of his family, gladly availed himself of the same excuse; and, to the infinite mortification of both aunts and nieces, the ball was broke up.

CHAPTER VI.

"What choice to choose for delicacy best."

MILTON.

Of what nature were the remarks passed in the parlour upon the new married couple, has not reached the writer of these memoirs with as much exactness as the foregoing circumstances; but they may in part be imagined from the sketch already given of the characters which formed the Glenfern party. The conciliatory indulgence of Mrs. Douglas, when aided by the good-natured Miss Grizzy, doubtless had a favorable effect on the irritated pride, but short-lived acrimony of the old gentleman. Certain it is, that before the evening concluded, they appeared all restored to harmony, and retired to their respective chambers in hopes to behold a more propitious morrow.

Who has not perused sonnets, odes, and speeches, in praise of that balmy blessing, sleep; from the divine effusions of Shakspeare, down to the drowsy notes of newspaper poets?

Yet cannot too much be said in its commendation. Sweet is its influence on the care-worn eyes, to tears accustomed! In its arms the statesman forgets his harassed thoughts; the weary and the poor are blessed with its charms; and conscience—even conscience —is sometimes soothed into silence, while the sufferer sleeps. But no where, perhaps, is its influence more happily felt, than in the heart oppressed by

the harassing accumulation of petty ills: like a troop of locusts, making up by their number and their stings what they want in magnitude.

Mortified pride in discovering the fallacy of our own judgment; to be ashamed of what we love, yet still to love, are feelings most unpleasant; and, though they assume not the dignity of deep distress, yet philosophy has scarce any power to soothe their worrying, incessant annoyance. Douglas was glad to forget himself in sleep. He had thought a vast deal that day, and of unpleasant subjects, more than the whole of his foregoing life would have produced. If he did not curse the fair object of his imprudence, he at least curst his own folly and himself; and these were his last waking thoughts.

But Douglas could not repose as long as the seven sleepers; and, in consequence of having retired sooner to bed than he was accustomed to do, he waked at an early hour in the morning.

The wonderful activity which people sometimes feel when they have little to do with their bodies, and less with their minds, caused him to rise hastily and dress, hoping to pick up a new set of ideas, by virtue of his locomotive powers.

On descending to the dining parlour, he found his father seated at the window, carefully perusing a pamphlet, written to illustrate the principle, *Let nothing be lost*, and containing many sage and erudite directions for the composition and dimensions of that ornament to a gentleman's farm-yard, and a cottager's front door, ycleped, in the language of the country, a *midden*—with the signification of which we would not, for the world, shock the more refined feelings of our southern readers.

Many were the inquiries about dear Lady Juliana: hoped she had rested well: hoped they found the bed comfortable, &c. &c. These inquiries were interrupted by the Laird, who requested his son to take a turn with him, while breakfast was getting

ready, that they might talk over past events, and new plans; that he might see the new planting on the hill; the draining of the great moss; with other agricultural concerns which we shall omit, not having the same power of commanding attention for our readers, as the Laird had from his hearers.

After repeated summonses, and many inquiries, from the impatient party already assembled round the breakfast table, Lady Juliana made her appearance, accompanied by her favourites, whom no persuasions of her husband could prevail upon her to leave behind.

As she entered the room, her olfactory nerves were smote with gales, not of "Araby the blest," but of old cheese and herrings, with which the hospitable board was amply provided.

The ladies, having severally exchanged the salutations of the morning, Miss Nicky commenced the operation of pouring out tea, while the Laird laid a large piece of herring on her Ladyship's plate.

"Good heavens! what am I to do with this?" exclaimed she: "do take it away, or I shall faint!"

"Brother, brother!" cried Miss Grizzy, in a tone of alarm, "I beg you won't place any unpleasant object before the eyes of our dear niece. I declare! —Pray, was it the sight or the smell of the beast* that shocked you so much, my dear Lady Juliana? I'm sure, I wish to goodness Lady Maclaughlan was come!"

Mr. Douglas, or the Major, as he was styled, immediately rose, and pulled the bell.

"Desire my gig to be got ready directly!" said he.

The aunts drew up stiffly, and looked at each other, without speaking; but the old gentleman

* In Scotland, every thing that flies and swims, ranks in the bestial tribe.

expressed his surprise, that his son should think of leaving them so soon.

"May we inquire the reason of this sudden resolution?" at length said Miss Jacky, in a tone of stifled indignation.

"Certainly, if you are disposed to hear it: It is because I find there is company expected."

The three ladies turned up their hands and eyes in speechless horror.

"Is it that virtuous woman, Lady Maclaughlan, you would shun, nephew?" demanded Miss Jacky.

"It is that insufferable woman I would shun," replied her nephew, with a heightened colour, and a violence very unusual with him.

The good Miss Grizzy drew out her pocket handkerchief; while Mrs. Douglas vainly endeavoured to silence her husband, and avert the rising storm.

"Dear Douglas!" whispered his wife in a tone of reproach.

"O, pray let him go on," said Miss Jacky, almost choking under the effort she made to appear calm, "Let him go on. Lady Maclaughlan's character, luckily, is far above the reach of calumny; nothing that Mr. Archibald Douglas can say, will have power to change our opinions, or, I hope, to prejudice his brother and Lady Juliana against this most exemplary virtuous woman—a woman of family—of fortune—of talents—of accomplishments! —a woman of unblemished reputation! of the strictest morals! sweetest temper! charming heart! delightful spirits! so charitable! every year gives fifty flannel petticoats to the old people of the parish—"

"Then such a wife as she is!" sobbed out Miss Grizzy: "She has invented, I don't know how many different medicines for Sir Sampson's complaint, and makes a point of his taking some of them every day; but, for her, I'm sure he would have been in his grave long ago."

"She's doing all she can to send him there, as she has done many a poor wretch already, with her infernal compositions."

Here Miss Grizzy sunk back in her chair, overcome with horror; and Miss Nicky let fall the tea-pot, the scalding contents of which discharged themselves upon the unfortunate Psyche, whose yells, mingled with the screams of its fair mistress, for awhile drowned even Miss Jacky's oratory.

"Oh! what shall I do?" cried Lady Juliana, as she bent over her favourite: Do send for a surgeon; pray, Henry, fly! Do fetch one directly, or she will die; and it would quite kill me to lose my darling. Do run, dearest Harry!"

"My dear Julia, how can you be so absurd? there's no surgeon within twenty miles of this."

"No surgeon within twenty miles!" exclaimed she, starting up. "How could you bring me to such a place! Good God! those dear creatures may die; I may die myself before I can get any assistance!"

"Don't be alarmed, my dearest niece," said the good Miss Grizzy; we are all doctors here. I understand something of physic myself; and our friend, Lady Maclaughlan, who, I dare say, will be here presently, is perfect mistress of every disease of the human frame."

"Clap a cauld potatae to the brute's tae," cried the old Laird gruffly.

"I've a box of her scald ointment that will cure it in a minute."

"If it don't cure, it will kill," said Mr. Douglas, with a smile.

"Brother," said Miss Jacky, rising with dignity from her chair, and waving her hand as she spoke —"Brother, I appeal to you, to protect the character of this most amiable respectable matron from the insults and calumny your son thinks proper to load it with. Sir Sampson Maclaughlan is

your friend; and it therefore becomes your duty to defend his wife."

"Troth, but I'll hae aneugh to do, if I am to stand up for a' my friends' wives," said the old gentleman. But, however, Archie, you are to blame: Leddy Maclaughlan is a very decent woman; at least, as far as I ken, though she is a little free in the gab; and, out of respect to my auld friend Sir Sampson, it is my desire that you should remain here to receive him, and that you trait baith him and his Lady discreetly."

This was said in too serious a tone to be disputed; and his son was obliged to submit.

The ointment meanwhile having been applied to Psyche's paw, peace was restored, and breakfast recommenced.

"I declare our dear niece has not tasted a morsel," observed Miss Nicky.

"Bless me, here's charming barley meal scones," cried one, thrusting a plateful of them before her. "Here's tempting pease bannocks," interposed another, "and oat cakes! I'm sure your Ladyship never saw such cakes."

"I can't eat any of those things," said their delicate niece, with an air of disgust. "I should like some muffin and chocolate."

"You forget you are not in London, my love," said her husband reproachfully.

"No, indeed, I do not forget it. Well then, give me some toast," with an air of languid condescension.

"Unfortunately, we happen to be quite out of loaf bread at present," said Miss Nicky; but we've sent to Drymsine for some. They bake excellent bread at Drymsine."

"Is there nothing within the bounds of possibility you would fancy, Julia?" asked Douglas. "Do think, love."

"I think I should like some grouse, or a beef

steak, if it was very nicely done," returned her Ladyship, in a languishing tone.

"Beef steak!" repeated Miss Grizzy.

"Beef steak!" responded Miss Jacky.

"Beef steak!" reverberated Miss Nicky.

After much deliberation and consultation amongst the three spinsters, it was at length unanimously carried, that the lady's whim should be indulged.

"Only think, sisters," observed Miss Grizzy, in an under tone, "what reflections we should have to make upon ourselves, if the child was to resemble a moor-fowl!"

"Or have a face like a raw beef steak!" said Miss Nicky.

These arguments were unanswerable; and a smoking steak and plump moor-fowl were quickly produced, of which Lady Juliana partook, in company with her four-footed favourites.

CHAPTER VII.

When winter soaks the fields, and female feet—
Too weak to struggle with tenacious clay,
Or ford the rivulets—are best at home." *The Task.*

THE meal being at length concluded, Glenfern desired Henry to attend him on a walk, as he wished to have a little more private conversation with him. Lady Juliana was beginning a remonstrance against the cruelty of taking Harry away from her, when her husband whispering her, that he hoped to make something of the old gentleman, and that he should soon be back, she suffered him to depart in silence.

Old Donald having at length succeeded in clearing the table of its heterogeneous banquet, it was quickly covered with the young ladies' work.

Miss Nicky withdrew to her household affairs. Miss Jacky sat with one eye upon Lady Juliana, the other upon her five nieces. Miss Grizzy seated herself by her Ladyship, holding a spread letter of Lady Maclaughlan's before her as a screen.

While the young ladies busily plied their needles, the elder ones left no means untried to entertain their listless niece, whose only replies were exclamations of weariness, or expressions of affection bestowed upon her favourites.

At length even Miss Jacky's sense, and Miss Grizzy's good nature, were *at fault;* when a ray of sunshine darting into the room, suggested the idea of a walk. The proposal was made, and assented to by her ladyship, in the twofold hope of meeting *her husband,* and pleasing her dogs, whose whining

and scratching had for some time testified their desire of a change. The ladies therefore separated to prepare for their *sortie*, after many recommendations from the aunts to be sure to *hap** well; but, as if distrusting her powers in that way, they speedily equipped themselves, and repaired to her chamber, arrayed *cap-a-pee* in the walking costume of Glenfern Castle. And, indeed, it must be owned their style of dress was infinitely more judicious than that of their fashionable niece; and it was not surprising, that they, in their shrunk duffle great-coats, vast poke bonnets, red worsted neckcloths, and pattens, should gaze with horror at her lace cap, lilac satin pelisse, and silk shoes. Ruin to the whole race of Glenfern, present and future, seemed inevitable from such a display of extravagance and imprudence. Having surmounted the first shock, Miss Jacky made a violent effort to subdue her rising wrath; and, with a sort of convulsive smile, addressed Lady Juliana: "Your Ladyship, I perceive, is not of the opinion of our inimitable bard, who, in his charming poem, the Seasons, says, 'Beauty needs not the foreign aid of ornament; but is, when unadorned, adorned the most.' That is a truth that ought to be impressed on every young woman's mind."

Lady Juliana only stared. She was as little accustomed to be advised as she was to hear Thomson's Seasons quoted.

"I declare that's all quite true," said the more temporizing Grizzy; "and certainly our girls are not in the least taken up about their dress, poor things! which is a great comfort. At the same time, I'm sure it's no wonder your Ladyship should be taken up about yours, for certainly that pelisse is most beautiful. Nobody can deny that; and I dare say it is the very newest fashion. At the same time;

* Wrap.

I'm just afraid that it's rather too delicate, and that it might perhaps get a little dirty on our roads; for although, in general, our roads are quite remarkable for being always dry, which is a great comfort in the country, yet, you know, the very best roads of course must be wet sometimes. And there's a very bad step just at the door almost, which Glenfern has been always speaking about getting mended. But, to be sure, he has so many things to think about, that it's no wonder he forgets sometimes; but I dare say he will get it done very soon now."

The prospect of the road being mended, produced no better effect than the quotation from Thomson's Seasons. It was now Miss Nicky's turn.

"I'm afraid your Ladyship will frighten our stirks and stots with your finery. I assure you they are not accustomed to see such fine figures; and," putting her hand out at the window, "I think it's spitting already."*

All three now joined in the chorus, beseeching Lady Juliana to put on something warmer and more wise-like.

"I positively have nothing," cried she, wearied with their importunities, "and I shan't get any winter things now till I return to town. My *roquelaire* does very well for the carriage."

The acknowledgment at the beginning of this speech was enough. All three instantly disappeared, like the genii of Aladin's lamp, and, like that same person, presently returned, loaded with what, in their eyes, were precious as the gold of Arabia. One displayed a hard worsted shawl, with a flowerpot at each corner; another held up a tartan cloak, with a hood; and a third thrust forward a dark cloth Joseph, lined with flannel; while one and all showered down a variety of old bonnets, fur tippets, hair soles, clogs, pattens, and endless *et ceteras*. Lady

* *A common expression in Scotland to signify slight rain.*

Juliana shrank with disgust from these "delightful haps," and resisted all attempts to have them forced upon her, declaring, in a manner which showed her determined to have her own way, that she would either go out as she was, or not go out at all. The aunts were therefore obliged to submit, and the party proceeded to what was termed the high road, though a stranger would have sought in vain for its pretensions to that title. Far as the eye could reach, and that was far enough, not a single vehicle could be descried on it, though its deep ruts showed that it was well frequented by carts. The scenery might have had charms for Ossian, but it had none for Lady Juliana; who would rather have been entangled in a string of Bond Street equipages, than traversing "the lonely heath, with the stream murmuring hoarsely; the old trees groaning in the wind; the troubled lake;" and the still more troubled sisters. As may be supposed, she very soon grew weary of the walk. The bleak wind pierced her to the soul; her silk slippers and lace flounces became undistinguishable masses of mud; her dogs chased the sheep, and were, in their turn, pursued by the "nowts," as the ladies termed the steers. One sister expatiated on the great blessing of having a peat moss at their door; another was at pains to point out the purposed site of a set of new offices; and the third lamented that her Ladyship had not on thicker shoes, that she might have gone and seen the garden. More than ever disgusted and wretched, the hapless Lady Juliana returned to the house, to fret away the time till her husband's return.

CHAPTER VIII.

——"On se rend insupportable dans la société par des défauts légers, mais que se font sentir à tout moment."

VOLTAIRE.

THE family of Glenfern have already said so much for themselves, that it seems as if little remained to be told by their biographer. Mrs. Douglas was the only member of the community, who was at all conscious of the unfortunate association of characters and habits that had just taken place. She was a stranger to Lady Juliana; but she was interested by her youth, beauty, and elegance, and felt for the sacrifice she had made: a sacrifice so much greater than it was possible she ever could have conceived or anticipated. She could in some degree enter into the nature of her feelings towards the old ladies; for she, too, had felt how disagreeable people might contrive to render themselves, without being guilty of any particular fault; and how much more difficult it is to bear with the weaknesses than the vices of our neighbours. Had these ladies' failings been greater in a moral point of view, it might not have been so arduous a task to put up with them. But to love such a set of little, trifling, tormenting foibles, all dignified with the name of virtues, required, from her elegant mind, an exertion of its highest principles; a continual remembrance of that difficult Christian precept, "to bear with one another." A person of less sense than Mrs. Douglas would have endeavoured to open the eyes of their understand-

ings, on what appeared to be the folly and narrow-mindedness of their ways; but she refrained from the attempt, not from want of benevolent exertion, but from an innate conviction, that their foibles all originated in what was now incurable; viz. the natural weakness of their minds, together with their ignorance of the world, and the illiberality and prejudices of a vulgar education. "These poor women," reasoned the charitable Mrs. Douglas, "are, perhaps, after all, better characters in the sight of God than I am. He who has endowed us all, as his wisdom has seen fit, and has placed me amongst them; Oh! may he teach me to remember, that we are all his children, and enable me to bear with their faults, while I study to correct my own."

Thus did this amiable woman contrive, not only to live in peace, but, without sacrificing her own liberal ideas, to be actually beloved by those amongst whom her lot had been cast, however dissimilar to herself. But for that Christian spirit, (in which must ever be included a liberal mind and gentle temper,) she must have felt towards her connexions a still stronger repugnance than was even manifested by Lady Juliana; for Lady Juliana's superiority over them was merely that of refined habits and elegant manners; whereas Mrs. Douglas' was the superiority of a noble and highly gifted mind, which could hold no intercourse with theirs, except by stooping to the level of their low capacities. But, that the merit of her conduct may be duly appreciated, I shall endeavour to give a slight sketch of the female *dramatis personæ* of Glenfern Castle.

Miss Jacky, the senior of the trio, was what is reckoned a very sensible woman—which generally means, a very disagreeable, obstinate, illiberal director of all men, women, and children—a sort of superintendant of all actions, time, and place—with unquestioned authority to arraign, judge, and condemn, upon the statutes of her own supposed sense.

Most country parishes have their sensible woman, who lays down the law on all affairs spiritual and temporal. Miss Jacky stood unrivalled as the sensible woman of Glenfern. She had attained this eminence, partly from having a little more understanding than her sisters, but principally from her dictatorial manner, and the pompous, decisive tone, in which she delivered the most common-place truth. At home, her supremacy in all matters of sense was perfectly established; and thence the infection, like other superstitions, had spread over the whole neighbourhood. As a sensible woman, she regulated the family, which she took care to let every body see: she was conductor of her nieces' education, which she took care to let every body hear; she was a sort of post-mistress general—a detector of all abuses and impositions; and deemed it her prerogative to be consulted about all the useful and useless things, which every body else could have done as well. She was liberal of her advice to the poor, always enforcing upon them the iniquity of idleness, but doing nothing for them in the way of employment—strict economy being one of the many points in which she was particularly sensible. The consequence was, while she was lecturing half the poor women in the parish for their idleness, the bread was kept out of their mouths, by the incessant carding of wool and knitting of stockings, and spinning, and reeling, and winding, and pirning, that went on amongst the ladies themselves. And, by the by, Miss Jacky is not the only sensible woman who thinks she is acting a meritorious part, when she converts what ought to be the portion of the poor into the employment of the affluent.

In short, Miss Jacky was all over sense. A skilful physiognomist would, at a single glance, have detected the sensible woman, in the erect head, the compressed lips, square elbows, and firm judi*cious step.* Even her very garments seemed to par-

take of the prevailing character of their mistress: her ruff always looked more sensible than any other body's; her shawl sat most sensibly on her shoulders; her walking shoes were acknowledged to be very sensible; and she drew on her gloves with an air of sense, as if the one arm had been Seneca, the other Socrates. From what has been said, it may easily be inferred, that Miss Jacky was in fact any thing but a sensible woman; as indeed no woman can be, who bears such visible outward marks of what is in reality the most quiet and unostentatious of all good qualities. But there is a spurious sense, which passes equally well with the multitude: it is easily assumed, and still easier maintained, common truths and a grave dictatorial air being all that is necessary for its support.

Miss Grizzy's character will not admit of so long a commentary as that of her sister: she was merely distinguishable from nothing by her simple good nature, the inextricable entanglement of her thoughts, her love of letter writing, and her friendship with Lady Maclaughlan. Miss Nicky had about as much sense as Miss Jacky; but, as no kingdom can maintain two kings, so no family can admit of two sensible women; and Nicky was, therefore, obliged to confine hers to the narrowest possible channels of house-keeping, mantua-making, &c. and to sit down for life (or at least till Miss Jacky should be married) with the dubious character of "not wanting for sense either." With all these little peccadilloes, the sisters possessed some good properties: they were well-meaning, kind-hearted, and, upon the whole, good-tempered; they loved one another, revered their brother, doated upon their nephews and nieces, took a lively interest in the poorest of their poor cousins, a hundred degrees removed, and had a firm conviction of the perfectability of human nature, as exemplified in the persons of all their own friends. "Even their failings leaned to virtue's

side;" for whatever they did was with the intention of doing good, though the means they made use of generally produced an opposite effect. But there are so many Miss Douglas' in the world, that doubtless every one of my readers is as well acquainted with them as I am myself. I shall, therefore, leave them to finish the picture according to their own ideas, while I return to the parlour, where the worthy spinsters are seated in expectation of the arrival of their friend.

CHAPTER IX.

"————"Though both
Not equal, as their sex not equal seemed—
For contemplation he, and valour formed;
For softness she, and sweet attractive grace."

MILTON.

"WHAT *can* have come over Lady Maclaughlan?" said Miss Grizzy, as she sat at the window in a dejected attitude.

"I think I hear a carriage at last" cried Miss Jacky, turning up her ears: "Wisht! let us listen."

"It's only the wind," sighed Miss Grizzy.

"It's the cart with the bread," said Miss Nicky.

"It's Lady Maclaughlan, I assure you, pronounced Miss Jacky.

The heavy rumble of a ponderous vehicle now proclaimed the approach of the expected visitor; which pleasing anticipation was soon changed into blissful certainty, by the approach of a high roofed, square-bottomed, pea-green chariot, drawn by two long-tailed white horses, and followed by a lacquey in the Highland garb. Out of this equipage issued a figure, clothed in a light coloured, large flowered chintz raiment, carefully drawn through the pocket holes, either for its own preservation, or the more disinterested purpose of displaying a dark short stuff petticoat, which, with the same liberality, afforded ample scope for the survey of a pair of worsted stockings and black leather shoes, something resembling buckets. A faded red cloth jacket, which bore evident marks of having been severed from its native skirts, now acted in the capacity of a spencer. On the head rose a stupendous fabric, in the form of

a cap, on the summit of which was placed a black beaver hat, tied *a la poissarde.* A small black satin muff in one hand, and a gold-headed walking-stick in the other, completed the dress and decoration of this personage.

The lacquey, meanwhile, advanced to the carriage; and putting in both his hands, as if to catch something, he pulled forth a small bundle, enveloped in a military cloke, the contents of which would have baffled conjecture, but for the large cocked hat, and little booted leg, which protruded at opposite extremities.

A loud, but slow and well modulated voice, now resounded through the narrow stone passage that conducted to the drawing-room.

"Bring him in—bring him in, Philistine! I always call my man Philistine, because he has Sampson in his hands. Set him down there," pointing to an easy chair, as the groupe now entered, headed by Lady Maclaughlan.

"Well, girls!" addressing the venerable spinsters, as they severally exchanged a tender salute: "so you're all alive, I see;—humph!"

"Dear Lady Maclaughlan, allow me to introduce our beloved niece, Lady Juliana Douglas," said Miss Grizzy, leading her up, and bridling as she spoke, with ill suppressed exultation.

"So—you're very pretty—yes, you are very pretty!" kissing the forehead, cheeks, and chin of the youthful beauty, between every pause. Then, holding her at arm's length, she surveyed her from head to foot, with elevated brows, and a broad fixed stare.

"Pray sit down, Lady Maclaughlan," cried her three friends all at once, each tendering a chair.

"Sit down!" repeated she; "why, what should I sit down for? I choose to stand—I don't like to sit—I never sit at home—Do I, Sir Sampson?" turning to the little warrior, who, having been seized

with a violent fit of coughing on his entrance, had now sunk back, seemingly quite exhausted, while the *Philistine* was endeavouring to disencumber him of his military accoutrements.

"How very distressing Sir Sampson's cough is!" said the sympathising Miss Grizzy.

"Distressing, child! No—it's not the least distressing. How can a thing be distressing that does no harm? He's much the better of it—it's the only exercise he gets."

"Oh! well, indeed, if that's the case, it would be a thousand pities to stop it," replied the accommodating spinster.

"No, it wouldn't be the least pity to stop it!" returned Lady Maclaughlan, in her loud authoritative tone; "because, though it's not distressing, its very disagreeable. But it cannot be stopped—you might as well talk of stopping the wind—it is a cradle cough."

"My dear Lady Maclaughlan!" screamed Sir Sampson, in a shrill pipe, as he made an effort to raise himself, and rescue his cough from this aspersion; "how can you persist in saying so, when I have told you so often it proceeds entirely from a cold caught a few years ago, when I attended his Majesty at—" Here a violent relapse carried the conclusion of the sentence along with it.

"Let him alone—don't meddle with him," called his lady to the assiduous nymphs who were bustling around him,—"Leave him to Philistine; he's in very good hands when he is in Philistine's." Then resting her chin upon the head of her stick, she resumed her scrutiny of Lady Juliana.

"You really are a pretty creature! You've got a very handsome nose, and your mouth's very well, but I don't like your eyes, they're too large and too light; they're saucer eyes, and I don't like saucer eyes. Why ha'nt you black eyes? you're not a bit like your father—I knew him very well. Your

mother was an heiress, your father married her for her money, and she married him to be a Countess, and so that's the history of their marriage—humph."

This well-bred harangue was delivered in an unvarying tone, and with unmoved muscles; for though the lady seldom failed of calling forth some conspicuous emotion, either of shame, mirth, or anger, on the countenances of her hearers, she had never been known to betray any correspondent feelings on her own; yet her features were finely formed, marked, and expressive; and, in spite of her ridiculous dress and eccentric manners, an air of dignity was diffused over her whole person, that screened her from the ridicule to which she must otherwise have been exposed. Amazement at the uncouth garb and singular address of Lady Maclaughlan, was seldom unmixed with terror at the stern imperious manner that accompanied all her actions. Such were the feelings of Lady Juliana, as she remained subjected to her rude gaze, and impertinent remarks.

"My Lady!" squeaked Sir Sampson forth from his easy chair.

"My love?" interrogated his lady as she leant upon her stick.

"I want to be introduced to my Lady Juliana Douglas; so give me your hand," attempting, at the same time, to emerge from the huge leathern receptacle into which he had been plunged by the care of the kind sisters.

"O pray sit still, dear Sir Sampson," cried they as usual all at once; "our sweet niece will come to you, don't take the trouble to rise; pray don't" each putting a hand on this man of might, as he was half risen, and pushing him down.

"Aye, come here, my dear," said Lady Maclaughlan; "you're abler to walk to Sir Sampson than he to you," pulling Lady Juliana in front of the easy chair; "there—that's her; you see she is *very pretty.*"

"Zounds, what is the meaning of all this!" screamed the enraged baronet: "My Lady Juliana Douglas, I am shocked beyond expression at this freedom of my lady's. I beg your ladyship ten thousand pardons: pray be seated, I'm shocked; I am ready to faint at the impropriety of this introduction, so contrary to all rules of etiquette. How *could* you behave in such a manner, my Lady Maclaughlan?"

"Why, you know, my dear, your legs may be very good legs, but they can't walk," replied she, with her usual *sang froid.*

"My Lady Maclaughlan, you perfectly confound me," stuttering with rage. "My Lady Juliana Douglas, see here," stretching out a meagre shank, to which not even the military boot and large spur could give a respectable appearance: "You see that leg strong and straight," stroaking it down; "now, behold the fate of war!" dragging forward the other, which was shrunk and shrivelled to almost one half its original dimensions. "These legs were once the same; but I repine not—I sacrificed it in a noble cause: to that leg my sovereign owes his life!"

"Well, I declare, I had no idea; I thought always it had been rheumatism," burst from the lips of the astonished spinsters, as they crowded round the illustrious limb, and regarded it with looks of veneration.

"Humph!" emphatically uttered his lady.

"The story's a simple one, ladies, and soon told: I happened to be attending his Majesty at a review; I was then aid-de-camp to Lord ———. His horse took fright, I—I—I,"—here, in spite of all the efforts that could be made to suppress it, the *royal cough* burst forth with a violence that threatened to silence its brave owner for ever.

"It's very strange you will talk, my love," said his sympathising lady, as she supported him; "talking never did, nor never will agree with you, it's

very strange what pleasure people take in talking—humph!"

"Is there any thing dear Sir Sampson could take?" asked Miss Grizzy.

"*Could* take? I don't know what you mean by *could* take. He coudn't take the moon, if you mean that; but he must take what I give him; so call Philistine, he knows where my cough tincture is."

"Oh, we have plenty of it in this press," said Miss Grizzy, flying to a cupboard; and, drawing forth a bottle, she poured out a bumper, and presented it to Sir Sampson.

"I'm poisoned!" gasped he, feebly; "that's not my lady's cough-tincture."

"Not cough-tincture!" repeated the horror-struck doctress, as for the first time she examined the label; "O! I declare, neither is it—its my own stomach lotion. Bless me, what will be done!" and she wrung her hands in despair. "Oh, Murdoch," flying to the *Philistine*, as he entered with the real cough-tincture, "I've given Sir Sampson a dose of my own stomach lotion by mistake, and I am terrified for the consequences!"

"Oo, but hur need na be feared, hur will no be a hair the war o't; for hurs wad na' tak' the feesick that the leddie ordered hur yestreen."

"Well, I declare things are wisely ordered," observed Miss Grizzy; "in that case, it may do dear Sir Sampson a great deal of good."

Just as this pleasing idea was suggested, Douglas and his father entered, and the ceremony of presenting her nephew to her friend was performed by Miss Grizzy in her most conciliating manner.

"Dear Lady Maclaughlan, this is our nephew Henry, who, I know, has the highest veneration for Sir Sampson and you. Henry, I assure you, Lady Maclaughlan, takes the greatest interest in every thing that concerns Lady Juliana and you."

"Humph!" rejoined her ladyship, as she surveyed him from head to foot: "So your wife fell in love with you, it seems; well, the more fool she; I never knew any good come of love marriages."

Douglas coloured, while he affected to laugh at this extraordinary address, and withdrawing himself from her scrutiny, resumed his station by the side of his Juliana.

"Now, girls, I must go to my toilette; which of you am I to have for my handmaid?"

"O! we'll all go," eagerly exclaimed the three nymphs; our dear niece will excúse us for a little; young people are never at a loss to amuse one another."

"Venus and the Graces, by Jove!" exclaimed Sir Sampson, bowing with an air of gallantry: "and now I must go and adonise a little myself."

The company then separated to perform the important offices of the toilette.

CHAPTER X.

"———— Nature here
Wanton'd as in her prime, and played at will
Her virgin fancies."

MILTON.

THE gentlemen were already assembled round the drawing-room fire, impatiently waiting the hour of dinner, when Lady Maclaughlan and her three friends entered. The masculine habiliments of the morning had been exchanged for a more feminine costume. She was now arrayed in a pompadour satin negligée, and a petticoat trimmed with Brussels lace. A high starched handkerchief formed a complete breastwork, on which, amid a large bouquet of truly artificial roses, reposed a miniature of Sir Sampson, *a la militaire*. A small fly cap of antique lace was scarcely perceptible on the summit of a stupendous frizzled toupee, hemmed in on each side by large curls. The muff and stick had been relinquished for a large fan, something resembling an Indian screen, which she waived to and fro in one hand, while a vast brocaded work-bag was suspended from the other.

'So, Major Douglas, your servant,' said she, in answer to the constrained formal bow with which he saluted her on her entrance—'Why, it's so long since I've seen you, that you may be a grandfather for aught I know.'

The poor awkward Misses at that moment came sneaking into the room: 'As for you, girls, you'll never be grandmothers, you'll never be married, *unless to* wild men of the woods. I suppose you'd

like that; it would save you the trouble of combing your hair, and tying your shoes, for then you could go without clothes altogether—humph! you'd be much better without clothes than to put them on as you do,' seizing upon the luckless Miss Baby, as she endeavoured to steal behind backs.

And, here, in justice to the lady, it must be owned, that, for once, she had some grounds for animadversion in the dress and appearance of the Misses Douglas.

They had staid out, running races, and riding on a pony, until near the dinner hour; and, dreading their father's displeasure should they be too late, they had, with the utmost haste, exchanged their thick morning dresses for thin muslin gowns, made by a mantua-maker of the neighbourhood, in the extreme of a two-year old fashion, when waists *were not*.

But as dame nature had been particularly lavish in the length of theirs, and the stay-maker had, according to their aunt's direction, given them *full measure* of their new dark stays, there existed a visible breach between the waists of their gowns and the bands of their petticoats, which they had vainly sought to adjust by a meeting. Their hair had been curled, but not combed, and dark gloves had been hastily drawn on to hide red arms.

'I suppose,' continued the stern Lady Maclaughlan, as she twirled her victim round and round; 'I suppose you think yourself vastly smart and well dressed. Yes, you are very neat indeed; one would suppose Ben Jonson had you in his eye when he composed that song;' then in a voice like thunder, she chanted forth—

> 'Give me a look, give me a face
> That makes simplicity a grace,
> Robes loosely flowing, hair as free,
> Such sweet neglect more taketh me."

Miss Grizzy was in the utmost perplexity, between her inclination to urge something in extenuation for the poor girls, and her fear of dissenting from Lady Maclaughlan; or rather of not immediately agreeing with her; she, therefore, steered, as usual, the middle course, and kept saying, 'Well, children, really, what Lady Maclaughlan says, is all very true;' at the same time, turning to her friend, —'I declare it is not much to be wondered at, young people are so thoughtless, poor lambs!'

'What's aw this wark aboot,' said the old gentleman, angrily; 'the girlies are weel eneugh; I see naething the matter wi' them—they're no dressed like auld queens, or stage actresses?' and he glanced his eye from Lady Maclaughlan to his elegant daughter in law, who just then entered, hanging, according to custom, on her husband, and preceded by Cupid; Mrs. Douglas followed, and the sound of the dinner bell put a stop to the dispute.

'Come, my leddie, we'll see how the dinner's dressed,' said the Laird, as he seized Lady Maclaughlan by the tip of the finger, and holding it up aloft, they marched into the dining room.

'Permit me, my Lady Juliana Douglas,' said the little Baronet, with much difficulty hobbling towards her, and attempting to take her hand—'Come, Harry, love; here, Cupid,' cried she; and without noticing the enraged Sir Sampson, she passed on, humming a tune, and leaning upon her husband.

'Astonishing! perfectly astonishing!' exclaimed the Baronet; 'how a young woman of Lady Juliana's rank and fashion, should be guilty of such a solecism in good breeding.'

'She is very young,' said Mrs. Douglas, smiling, as he limped along with her, 'and you must make allowances for her; but, indeed, I think her beauty must ever be a sufficient excuse for any little errors she may commit, with a person of such taste and gallantry as Sir Sampson Maclaughlan.'

The little Baronet smiled, pressed the hand he held; and, soothed by the well timed compliment he seated himself next to Lady Juliana with some complacency. As she insisted on having her husband on the other side of her, Mr. Douglas was condemned to take his station by the hated Lady Maclaughlan, who, for the first time, observing Mrs. Douglas, called her,

'Come here, my love; I hav'nt seen you these hundred years;' then seizing her face between her hands, she saluted her in the usual style: 'There,' at length releasing Mrs. Douglas from her gripe—'there's for you; I love you very much; you're neither a fool, nor a hoyden; you're a fine intelligent being.'

Having carefully rolled up, and deposited her gloves in her pocket, she pulled out her pin-cushion, and calling Miss Bella, desired her to pin her napkin over her shoulders; which done, she began to devour her soup in silence.

Peace, was, however, of short duration. Old Donald, in removing a dish of whipt-cream, unfortunately overturned one upon Lady Maclaughlan's pompadour satin petticoat; the only part of her dress that was unprotected.

'Do you see what you have done, you old Donald you!' cried she, seizing the culprit by the sleeve; 'why, youv'e got St. Vitus' dance—a fit hand to carry whipt-cream to be sure! why, I could as well carry a custard on the point of a bayonet—humph!'

'Dear me, Donald, how could you be so senseless!' cried Miss Jacky.

'Preserve me, Donald, I thought you had more sense!' squeaked Miss Nicky.

'I am sure, Donald, that was na' like you!' said Miss Grizzy, as the friends all flocked around the petticoat, each suggesting a different remedy.

'It's all of you, girls, that this has happened; why

can't you have a larger table-cloth upon your table? and that old man has the palsy; why don't you electrify him?' in a tone admirably calculated to have that effect.

'I declare, it's all very true,' observed Miss Grizzy, the table-cloth *is* very small, and Donald certainly *does* shake, that cannot be denied;' but, lowering her voice, 'he's so obstinate, we really don't know what to do with him; my sisters, and I, attempted to use the flesh-brush with him.'

'Oh, and an excellent thing it is; I make Philistine rub Sir Sampson every morning and night. If it was not for that, and his cough, nobody would know whether he were dead or alive; I don't believe he would know himself—humph!'

Sir Sampson's lemon face assumed an orange hue, as he overheard this domestic detail; but not daring to contradict the facts, he prudently turned a deaf ear to them, and attempted to carry on a flirtation with Lady Juliana, through the medium of Cupid, whom he had coaxed upon his knee.

Dinner being at length ended, toasts succeeded; and each of the ladies having given her favourite laird, the signal of retreat was given, and a general movement took place.

Lady Juliana throwing herself upon a sofa, with her pugs, called Mrs. Douglas to her: 'Do sit down here, and talk with me,' yawned she.

Her sister-in-law, with great good humour, fetched her work, and seated herself by the spoilt child.

'What strange thing is that you are making?' asked she, as Mrs. Douglas pulled out her knitting.

'It's a child's stocking!' replied her sister-in-law.

'A child's stocking! oh, by the by, have you a great many children?'

'I have none,' answered Mrs. Douglas, with a half-stifled sigh.

'None at all! repeated Lady Juliana, with sur-

prise; 'then, why do you make children's stockings?'

'I make them for those whose parents cannot afford to purchase them.'

'La! what poor wretches they must be, that can't afford to buy stockings,' rejoined Lady Juliana, with a yawn; 'it's monstrous good of you to make them, to be sure; but it must be a shocking bore! and such a trouble!' and another long yawn succeeded.

'Not half such a bore to me, as to sit idle,' returned Mrs. Douglas, with a smile, 'nor near so much trouble as you undergo with your favourites.'

Lady Juliana made no reply, but turning from her sister-in-law, soon was, or affected to be, sound asleep, from which she was only roused by the entrance of the gentlemen. A rubber or a reel, my leddie?' asked the laird, going up to his daughter-in-law.

'Julia, love,' said her husband, 'my father asks you if you choose cards or dancing.'

'There's nobody to dance with,' said she, casting a languid glance around; 'I'll play at cards.'

'Not whist, surely!' said Henry.

'Whist! oh heavens? no.'

'Weel, weel, you youngsters will get a round game; come my Leddy Maclaughlan, Grizzy, Mrs. Douglas, hey for the odd trick and the honours!'

'What would your ladyship choose to play at?' asked Miss Jacky, advancing with a pack of cards in one hand, and a box of counters in the other.

'O, any thing; I like loo very well, or quadrille, or—I really don't care what.'

The Misses, who had gathered round, and were standing gaping in joyful expectation of Pope Joan, or a pool at commerce, here exchanged sorrowful glances.

'I am afraid the young people don't play these games,' replied Miss Jacky; 'but we've counters

enough,' shaking her little box, 'for Pope Joan, and we all know that.'

'Pope Joan! I never heard of such a game,' replied Lady Juliana.

'O, we can soon learn you,' said Miss Nicky, who having spread the green cloth on the tea-table, now advanced to join the consultation.

'I hate to be taught,' said Lady Juliana, with a yawn; 'besides, I am sure it must be something very stupid.'

'Ask if she plays commerce,' whispered Miss Bella to Miss Baby.

The question was put, but with no better success, and the young ladies' faces again bespoke their disappointment; which their brother observing, he good-naturedly declared his perfect knowledge of commerce; 'and I must insist upon teaching you, Juliana,' gently dragging her to the table.

'What's the pool to be?' asked one of the young ladies.

'I'm sure I don't know,' said the aunts, looking to each other.

'I suppose we must make it sixpence,' said Miss Jacky, after a whispering consultation with her sister.

'In that case we can afford nothing to the best hand,' observed Miss Nicky. 'And we ought to have five lives and graces,' added one of the nieces.

These points having been conceded, the preliminaries were at length settled. The cards were slowly *doled* out by Miss Jacky; and Lady Juliana was carefully instructed in the rules of the game, and strongly recommended always to try for a sequence, or pairs, &c. 'And if you win,' rejoined Miss Nicky, shaking the snuffer-stand in which was deposited the sixpences, 'you get all this.'

As may be conjectured, Lady Juliana's patience could not survive more than one life; she had no notion of playing for sixpences, and could not be at

the trouble to attend to any instructions; she therefore quickly retired in disgust, leaving the aunts and nieces to struggle for the glorious prize. 'My dear child, you played that last stroke like a perfect natural,' cried Lady Maclaughlan to Miss Grizzy, as the rubber ended, they arose from the table.

'Indeed, I declare, I daresay I did,' replied her friend, in a deprecating tone.

'Daresay you did! I know you did—humph! I knew the ace lay with you; I knew that as well as if I had seen it. I suppose you have eyes—but I don't know; if you have, didn't you see Glenfern turn up the king, and yet you returned his lead—returned your adversary's lead in the face of his king. I've been telling you these twenty years, not to return your adversary's lead; nothing can be more despicable; nothing can be a greater proof of imbecility of mind—humph!' Then, seating herself, she began to exercise her fan with considerable activity. 'This has been the most disagreeable day I ever spent in this house girls. I don't know what's come over you, but you are all wrong: my petticoat's ruined; my pockets picked at cards: It won't do, girls; it won't do—humph!'

'I am sure, I can't understand it,' said Miss Grizzy, in a rueful accent; 'there really appears to have been some fatality.'

'Fatality!—humph! I wish you would give every thing its right name. What do you mean by fatality?'

'I declare—I am sure—I—I really don't know,' stammered the unfortunate Grizzy.

'Do you mean that the spilling of the custard was the work of an angel?' demanded her unrelenting friend.

'O, certainly not.'

'Or that it was the devil tempted you to throw away your ace there? I suppose there's fatality in

our going to supper just now,' continued she, as her deep-toned voice resounded through the passage that conducted to the dining room; 'and I suppose it will be called a fatality, if that old Fate,' pointing to Donald, 'scalds me to death with that mess of porridge he's going to put on the table—humph!'

No such fatality, however, occurred; and the rest of the evening passed off in as much harmony as could be expected from the very heterogeneous parts of which the society was formed.

The family groupe had already assembled round the breakfast table, with the exception of Lady Juliana, who chose to take that meal in bed; but, contrary to her usual custom, no Lady Maclaughlan had yet made her appearance.

'The scones will be like leather,' said Miss Grizzy, as she wrapped another napkin round them.

'The eggs will be like snow balls,' cried Miss Jacky, popping them into the slop-bason.

'The tea will be like brandy,' observed Miss Nicky, as she poured more water to the three teaspoonfuls she had infused.

'I wish we saw our breakfast,' said the Laird, as he finished the newspapers, and deposited his spectacles in his pocket.

At that moment the door opened, and the person in question entered in her travelling dress, followed by Sir Sampson, Philistine bringing up the rear with a large green bag and a little band-box.

'I hope your bed was warm and comfortable? I hope you rested well? I hope Sir Sampson's quite well?' Immediately burst, as if from a thousand voices, while the sisters officiously fluttered round their friend.

'I rested very ill; my bed was very uncomfortable; and Sir Sampson's as sick as a cat—humph!'

Three disconsolate 'Bless me's!' here burst forth.

'Perhaps your bed was too hard?' said Miss Grizzy.

'Or too soft?' suggested Miss Jacky.

'Or too hot?' added Miss Nicky.

'It was neither too hard, nor too soft, nor too hot, nor too cold,' thundered the Lady, as she seated herself at the table; 'but it was all of them.'

'I declare, that's most distressing,' said Miss Grizzy, in a tone of sorrowful amazement. 'Was your head high enough, dear Lady Maclaughlan?"

'Perhaps it was too high,' said Miss Jacky.

'I know nothing more disagreeable than a high head,' remarked Miss Nicky.

'Except a fool's head—humph!'

The sound of a carriage here set all ears on full stretch, and presently the well-known pea-green drew up.

'Dear me! Bless me! Goodness me! shrieked the three ladies at once. 'Surely, Lady Maclaughlan, you can't—you don't—you won't; this must be a mistake.'

'There's no mistake in the matter, girls,' replied their friend, with her accustomed *sang froid.* 'I'm going home; so I ordered the carriage; that's all—humph!'

'Going home!' faintly murmured the disconsolate spinsters.

'What! I suppose you think I ought to stay here and have another petticoat spoiled; or lose another half crown at cards; or have the finishing stroke put to Sir Sampson—humph!'

'Oh! Lady Maclaughlan!' was three times uttered in reproachful accents.

'I don't know what else I should stay for; you are not yourselves, girls; you've all turned topsy-turvy. I've visited here these twenty years, and I never saw things in the state they are now—humph!'

'I declare its very true,' sighed Miss Grizzy; 'we certainly are a little in confusion, that can't be denied.'

'Denied! Why, can you deny that my petticoat's ruined? Can you deny that my pocket was picked of half-a-crown for nothing? Can you deny that Sir Sampson has been half-poisoned? and—'

'My Lady Maclaughlan,' interrupted the enraged husband, 'I—I—I am surprised—I am shocked! Zounds, my Lady, I wont suffer this! I cannot stand it;' and pushing his tea-cup away, he arose, and limped to the window. Philistine here entered to inform his mistress, that 'aw thing was ready.'—'Steady, boys steady! I always am ready,' responded the Lady in a tone adapted to the song. 'Now I am ready—say nothing, girls—you know my rules—Here, Philistine, wrap up Sir Sampson, and put him in—Get along, my love—Good by, girls; and I hope you will all be restored to your right senses soon.'

'O, Lady Maclaughlan! whined the weeping Grizzy, as she embraced her friend, who somewhat melted at the signs of her distress, bawled out from the carriage, as the door was shut, 'Well, God bless you, girls, and make you what you have been; and come to Loch Marlie Castle soon, and bring your wits along with you.'

The carriage then drove off, and the three disconsolate sisters returned to the parlour, to hold a cabinet council as to the causes of the late disasters.

CHAPTER XI.

"————If there be cure or charm
To respite or relieve, or slack the pain
Of this ill mansion."

MILTON.

TIME, which generally alleviates ordinary distresses, served only to augment the severity of Lady Juliana's; as day after day rolled heavily on, and found her still an inmate of Glenfern Castle. Destitute of every resource in herself, she yet turned with contempt from the scanty sources of occupation or amusement that were suggested by others; and Mrs. Douglas' attempts to teach her to play at chess and read Shakspeare, were as unsuccessful as the endeavours of the good aunts to persuade her to study Fordyce's Sermons, and make baby linen.

In languid dejection, or fretful repinings, did the unhappy beauty therefore consume the tedious hours, while her husband sought alternately to sooth with fondness he no longer felt, or flatter with hopes which he knew to be groundless. To his father alone could he now look for any assistance, and from him he was not likely to obtain it in the form he desired; as the old gentleman repeatedly declared his utter inability to advance him any ready money, or to allow him more than a hundred a-year, moreover to be paid quarterly; a sum which could not defray their expenses to London.

Such was the state of affairs, when the Laird one morning entered the dining room, with a face of much importance, and addressed his son with 'Weel, Harry, you're a lucky man; and it's an ill

wind that blaws naebody gude: here's puir Macglashan gane like snaw aff a dyke.'

'Macglashan gone!' exclaimed Miss Grizzy. 'Impossible, brother; it was only yesterday I sent him a blister for his back!'

'And I,' said Miss Jacky, 'talked to him for upwards of two hours last night, on the impropriety of his allowing his daughter to wear white gowns on Sunday.'

'By my troth, an' that was eneugh to kill ony man,' muttered the Laird.

'How I am to derive any benefit from this important demise, is more than I can perceive,' said Henry, in a somewhat contemptuous tone.

'You see,' replied his father, 'that by our agreement his farm falls vacant in consequence.'

'And I hope I am to succeed to it?' replied the son, with a smile of derision.

'Exactly—By my faith, but you have a bein downset. There's three thousand and seventy-five acres of as good sheep-walk as any in the whole country-side; and I shall advance you stocking and stedding, and every thing complete to your very peat-stacks. What think ye of that?' slapping his son's shoulder, and rubbing his own hands with delight as he spoke.

Horror-struck at a scheme which appeared to him a thousand times worse than any thing his imagination had ever painted, poor Henry stood in speechless consternation; while 'charming! excellent! delightful!' was echoed by the aunts, as they crowded round, wishing him joy, and applauding their brother's generosity.

'What will our sweet niece say to this, I wonder?' said the innocent Grizzy, who in truth wondered none. 'I would like to see her face when she hears it;' and her own was puckered into various shapes of delight.

'I have no doubt but her good sense will teach her to appreciate properly the blessings of her lot,' observed the more reflecting Jacky.

'She has had her own good luck,' quoth the sententious Nicky, 'to find such a down-set all cut and dry.'

At that instant the door opened, and the favoured individual in question entered. In vain Douglas strove to impose silence on his father and aunts. The latter sat, bursting with impatience to break out into exclamation, while the former, advancing to his fair daughter-in-law, saluted her as 'Lady Clackandow!' Then the torrent burst forth; and, stupified with surprise, Lady Juliana suffered herself to be kissed and hugged by the whole host of aunts and nieces; while the very walls seemed to reverberate the shouts; and the pugs and mackaw, who never failed to take part in every commotion, began to bark and scream in chorus.

The old gentleman, clapping his hands to his ears, rushed out of the room. His son, cursing his aunts, and every thing around him, kicked Cupid, and gave the mackaw a box on the ear, as he also quitted the apartment, with more appearance of anger than he had ever yet betrayed.

The tumult at length began to subside. The mackaw's screams gave place to a low quivering croak; and the insulted pug's yells yielded to a gentle whine. The aunts' obstreperous joy began to be chastened with fear for the consequences that might follow an abrupt disclosure; and, while Lady Juliana condoled with her favourites, it was concerted between the prudent aunts, that the joyful news should be broke to their niece in the most cautious manner possible. For that purpose, Misses Grizzy and Jacky seated themselves on each side of her; and, after duly preparing their voices, by sundry small hems, Miss Grizzy thus began:

'I'm sure—I declare—I dare say, my dear Lady Juliana, you must think we are all distracted.'

Her auditor made no attempt to contradict the supposition.

'We certainly ought, to be sure, to have been more cautious, considering your delicate situation; but the joy—though, indeed, it seems cruel to say so. And I am sure you will sympathise, my dear niece, in the cause, when you hear that it is occasioned by our poor neighbour Macglashan's death, which, I'm sure, was quite unexpected. Indeed, I declare I can't conceive how it came about; for Lady Maclaughlan, who is an excellent judge of these things, thought he was really a remarkable stout looking man for his time of life; and indeed, except occasional colds, which you know we are all subject to, I really never knew him complain. At the same time—'

'I don't think, sister, you are taking the right method of communicating the intelligence to our niece,' said Miss Jacky.

'You cannot communicate any thing that would give me the least pleasure, unless you could tell me that I was going to leave this place,' cried Lady Juliana, in a voice of deep despondency.

'Indeed! if it can afford your Ladyship so much pleasure to be at liberty to quit the hospitable mansion of your amiable husband's respectable father,' said Miss Jacky, with an inflamed visage and outspread hands, 'you are at perfect liberty to depart when you think proper. The generosity, I may say the munificence, of my excellent brother, has now put it in your power to do as you please, and to form your own plans.'

'O delightful!' exclaimed Lady Juliana, starting up; now I shall be quite happy. Where's Harry? Does he know—is he gone to order the carriage—can we get away to-day?' And she was flying out of the

room, when Miss Jacky caught her by one hand, while Miss Grizzy secured the other.

'Oh! pray don't detain me! I must find Harry; and I have all my things to put up, struggling to release herself from the gripe of the sisters; when the door opened, and Harry entered, eager, yet dreading, to know the effects of the *eclaircissement*. His surprise was extreme at beholding his wife, with her eyes sparkling, her cheeks glowing, and her whole countenance expressing extreme pleasure. Darting from her keepers, she bounded towards him with the wildest ejaculations of delight; while he stood alternately gazing at her and his aunts, seeking, by his eyes, the explanation he feared to demand.

'My dearest Juliana, what is the meaning of all this?' he at length articulated.

'O, you cunning thing! So you think I don't know that your father has given you a great—great quantity of money, and that we may go away whenever we please, and do just as we like, and live in London, and—and—Oh delightful!' And she bounded and skipped before the eyes of the petrified spinsters.

'In the name of heaven, what does all this mean?' asked Henry, addressing his aunts, who for the first time in their lives, were struck dumb by astonishment. But Miss Jacky, at length recollecting herself, turned to Lady Juliana, who was still testifying her delight by a variety of childish but graceful movements, and thus addressed her:

'Permit me to put a few questions to your Ladyship, in presence of those who were witnesses of what has already passed.'

'O, I can't endure to be asked questions; besides, I have no time to answer them.'

'Your Ladyship must excuse me; but I can't permit you to leave this room under the influence of an error. Have the goodness to answer me the following ques-

tions, and you will then be at liberty to depart: Did I inform your Ladyship, that my brother had given my nephew a great quantity of money?'

'O yes—a great, great deal—I don't know how much, though—'

'Did I?' returned her interrogator.

'Come, come, have done with all this confounded nonsense!' exclaimed Henry passionately: 'Do you imagine I will allow Lady Juliana to stand here all day, to answer all the absurd questions that come into the heads of three old women? You stupify and bewilder her with your eternal tattling and round-about harangues.' And he paced the room in a paroxysm of rage, while his wife suspended her dancing, and stood in breathless amazement.

'I declare—I'm sure—it's a thousand pities that there should have been any mistake made,' whined poor Miss Grizzy.

'The only remedy is to explain the matter quickly,' observed Miss Nicky; 'better late than never.'

'I have done,' said Miss Jacky, seating herself with much dignity.

'The short and the long of it is this,' said Miss Nicky: 'My brother has not made Henry a present of money. I assure you money is not so rife; but he has done what is much better for you both,—he has made over to him that fine thriving farm of poor Macglashan's.'

'No money!' repeated Lady Juliana, in a disconsolate tone, then quickly brightening up, 'It would have been better, to be sure, to have had the money directly; but you know we can easily sell the estate. How long will it take—a week?'

'Sell Clackandow! exclaimed the three horror-struck daughters of the house of Douglas: 'Sell Clackandow! Oh! oh! oh!'

'What else could we do with it?' inquired her Ladyship.

'Live at it, to be sure,' cried all three.

'Live at it!' repeated she, with a shriek of horror that vied with that of the spinsters—Live at it! Live on a thriving farm! Live all my life in such a place as this! Oh! the very thought is enough to kill me!'

'There is no occasion to think or say any more about it,' interrupted Henry, in a calmer tone; and, glancing round on his aunts, 'I therefore desire no more may be said on the subject.'

'And is this really all! And have you got no money? And are we not going away?' gasped the disappointed Lady Juliana, as she gave way to a violent burst of tears, that terminated in a fit of hysterics: at sight of which, the good spinsters entirely forgot their wrath, and while, one burnt feathers under her nose, and another held her hands, a third drenched her in floods of Lady Maclaughlan's hysteric water. After going through the regular routine, the lady's paroxysm subsided; and, being carried to bed, she soon sobbed herself into a feverish slumber; in which state the harassed husband left her, to attend a summons from his mother.

CHAPTER XII.

"See what delight in sylvan scenes appear!"

POPE.

———"Haply this life is best,
Sweetest to you, well corresponding
With your stiff age, but unto us it is
A cell of ignorance, a prison for a debtor."

Cymbeline.

HE found the old gentleman in no very complaisant humour, from the disturbances that had taken place, but the chief cause of which he was still in ignorance of. He therefore accosted his son with—

'What was the meaning o' a' that skirling and squeeling I heard a while ago? By my faith, there's nae bearing this din! Thae beasts o' your wife's are aneugh to drive a body oot o' their judgment. But she maun gie up thae maggots when she becomes a farmer's wife. She maun get stirks and stots to make pets o', if she maun hae *four-fitted* favourites: but, to my mind, it wad set her better to be carrying a wise-like wean in her arms, than trailing aboot wi' thae confoonded dougs an' paurits.'

Henry coloured, bit his lips, but made no reply to this elegant address of his father's: who continued, 'I sent for you, Sir, to have some conversation about this farm of Macglashan's; so sit down there, till I show you the plans.'

Hardly conscious of what he was doing, poor Henry gazed in silent confusion, as his father pointed out the various properties of this his future pos-

session. Wholly occupied in debating within himself how he was to decline the offer without a downright quarrel, he heard, without understanding a word, all the old gentleman's plans and proposals for building dykes, draining moss, &c.: and, perfectly unconscious of what he was doing, yielded a ready assent to all the improvements that were suggested.

'Then as for the hoose and offices—let me see,' continued the Laird, as he rolled up the plans of the farm, and pulled forth that of the dwelling house, from a bundle of papers: 'Ay, here it is. By my troth, ye'll be weel lodged here. The hoose is in a manner quite new, for it has never had a brush upon it yet. And there's a byre—fient a bit, if I would mean the best man i' the country to sleep there himsel.'

A pause followed, during which Glenfern was busily employed in poring over his parchment; then taking off his spectacles, and surveying his son, 'And now, Sir, that you've heard a' the oots an' ins o' the business, what think you your farm should bring you at the year's end?'

'I—I—I'm sure—I—I don't know,' stammered poor Henry, awakening from his reverie.

'Come, come, gi'e a guess.'

'I really—I cannot—I have'nt the least idea.'

'I desire, Sir, ye'll say something directly, that I may judge whether or no ye ha'e common sense,' cried the old gentleman angrily.

'I should suppose—I imagine—I don't suppose it will exceed seven or eight hundred a year,' said his son in the greatest trepidation at this trial of his intellect.

'Seven or eight hundred deevils!' cried the incensed Laird, starting up and pushing his papers from him; 'by my faith, I believe ye're a born idiot! Seven or eight hundred pounds!' repeated he, at least a dozen times, as he whisked up and down

the little apartment with extraordinary velocity, while poor Henry affected to be busily employed in gathering up the parchments with which the floor was strewed.

'I'll tell you what, Sir,' continued he, stopping; 'you're no fit to manage a farm; you're as ignorant as yon coo, an' as senseless as its cauf. Wi' gude management, Clackandow should produce you twa hunder and odd pounds yearly; but in your guiding, I doot if it will yield the half. However, tak it or want it, mind me, Sir, that it's a' ye hae to trust to in my life time; so ye may mak the maist o't.'

Various and painful were the emotions that struggled in Henry's breast at this declaration. Shame, regret, indignation, all burned within him; but the fear he entertained of his father, and the consciousness of his absolute dependence, chained his tongue, while the bitter emotions that agitated him, painted themselves legibly in his countenance. His father observed his agitation; and, mistaking the cause, felt somewhat softened at what he conceived his son's shame and penitence for his folly: he therefore extended his hand towards him, saying, 'Weel, weel, nae mair aboot it; Clackandow's yours, as soon as I can put you in possession: in the mean time, stay still here, and welcome.'

'I—am much obliged to you for the offer, Sir; I—feel very grateful for your kindness.' at length articulated his son; 'but—I—am, as you observe, so perfectly ignorant of country matters, that I—I —In short, I am afraid I should make a bad hand of the business.'

'Nae doot, nae doot ye would, if ye was left to your ain discretion; but ye'll get mair sense, and I shall put ye upon a method, and provide ye wi' a grieve; an' if you are active, and your wife managing, there's nae fear o'you.'

'But Lady Juliana, Sir, has never been accustomed—'

'Let her serve an apprenticeship to your aunts; she cou'dna be in a better school.'

'But her education, Sir, has been so different from what would be required in that station,' resumed her husband, choaking with vexation, at the idea of his beauteous high-born bride being doomed to the drudgery of household cares.

'Edication! what has her edication been, to mak her different frae other women? If a woman can nurse her bairns, mak their claes, and manage her hoose, what mair need she do? If she can play a tune on the spinnet, and dance a reel, and play a rubber at whist—nae doot these are accomplishments, but the're soon learnt. Edication! pooh!—I'll be bound Leddy Jully Anie wull mak as gude a figure by and by as the best edicated woman in the country.'

'But she dislikes the country, and—'

'She'll soon come to like it. Wait a wee till she has a wheen bairns, and a hoose o' her ain, an' I'll be bound she'll be happy as the day's lang.'

'But the climate does not agree with her,' continued the tender husband, almost driven to extremities by the persevering simplicity of his father.

'Stay a wee till she gets to Clackandow! there's no a finer, freer-aired situation in a' Scotland: the air's sharpish, to be sure, but fine and bracing; and you have a braw peat moss at your back to keep you warm.'

Finding it in vain to attempt *insinuating* his objections to a pastoral life, poor Henry was at length reduced to the necessity of coming to the point with the old gentleman, and telling him plainly, that it was not at all suited to his inclinations, or Lady Juliana's rank and beauty.

Vain would be the attempt to paint the fiery wrath and indignation of the ancient Highlander, as the naked truth stood revealed before him:—

that his son despised the occupation of his fathers, even the feeding of sheep, and the breeding of black cattle; and that his high-born spouse was above fulfilling those duties, which he had ever considered the chief end for which woman was created. He swore, stamped, screamed, and even skipped with rage, and, in short, went through all the evolutions, as usually performed by testy old gentlemen, on first discovering that they have disobedient sons and undutiful daughters. Henry, though uncommonly good tempered, inherited a portion of his father's warmth, became at length irritated at the invectives that were so liberally bestowed on him, and replied in language less respectful than the old Laird was accustomed to hear; and the altercation became so violent, that they parted in mutual anger; Henry returning to his wife's apartment in a state of the greatest disquietude he had ever known. To her childish complaints, and tiresome inquiries, he no longer vouchsafed to reply, but paced the chamber with a disordered mien, in sullen silence; till at length, distracted by her reproaches, and disgusted with her selfishness, he rushed from the apartment, and quitted the house.

CHAPTER XIII.

"Never talk to me; I will weep."
As You Like It.

TWICE had the dinner bell been loudly sounded by old Donald, and the family of Glenfern were all assembled, yet their fashionable guests had not appeared. Impatient of delay, Miss Jacky hastened to ascertain the cause. Presently she returned in the utmost perturbation, and announced that Juliana was in bed in a high fever, and Henry no where to be found. The whole eight rushed up stairs to ascertain the fact, leaving the old gentleman much discomposed at this unseasonable delay.

Some time elapsed ere they again returned, which they did with lengthened faces, and in extreme perturbation. They had found their noble niece, according to Miss Jacky's report, in bed—according to Miss Grizzy's opinion, in a brain fever; as she no sooner perceived them enter, than she covered her head with the bed-clothes, and continued screaming for them to begone, till they had actually quitted the apartment.

'And what proves beyond a doubt, that our sweet niece is not herself,' continued poor Miss Grizzy, in a lamentable tone, 'is, that we appeared to her in every form but our own! She sometimes took us for cats; then thought we were ghosts haunting her; and, in short, it is impossible to tell all the things she called us; and she screams so for Harry to come and take her away, that I am sure—I declare—I don't know what's come over her!'

Mrs. Douglas could scarce suppress a smile at the simplicity of the good spinsters. Her husband and she had gone out, immediately after breakfast, to pay a visit a few miles off, and did not return till near the dinner hour. They were therefore ignorant of all that had been acted during their absence; but, as she suspected something was amiss, she requested the rest of the company would proceed to dinner, and leave her to ascertain the nature of Lady Juliana's disorder.

'Don't come near me!' shrieked her ladyship, on hearing the door open: 'Send Harry to take me away—I don't want any body but Harry!' and a torrent of tears, sobs, and exclamations followed.

'My dear Lady Juliana,' said Mrs. Douglas, softly approaching the bed, 'compose yourself; and if my presence is disagreeable to you, I shall immediately withdraw.'

'O, is it you?' cried her sister-in-law, uncovering her face at the sound of her voice: 'I thought it had been those frightful old women come to tormente me; and I shall die—I know I shall—if ever I look at them again. But I don't dislike *you;* so you may stay if you choose, though I don't want any body but Harry, to come and take me away.'

A fresh fit of sobbing here impeded her utterance; and Mrs. Douglas, compassionating her distress, while she despised her folly, seated herself by the bedside, and taking her hand, in the sweetest tone of complacency, attempted to soothe her into composure.

'The only way in which you can be less miserable,' said Mrs. Douglas, in a soothing tone, 'is to support your present situation with patience, which you may do by looking forward to brighter prospects. It is *possible* that your stay here may be short; and it is *certain* that it is in your own pow-

er to render your life more agreeable, by endeavouring to accommodate yourself to the peculiarities of your husband's family. No doubt, they are often tiresome and ridiculous; but they are always kind and well-meaning.'

'You may say what you please, but I think them all odious creatures; and I won't live here with patience; and I shan't be agreeable to them; and all the talking in the world won't make me less miserable. If you were me, you would be just the same; but you have never been in London—that's the reason.'

'Pardon me,' replied her sister-in-law, 'I spent many years of my life there.'

'You lived in London!' repeated Lady Juliana, in astonishment. 'And how then can you contrive to exist here?'

'I not only contrive to exist, but to be extremely contented with existence,' said Mrs. Douglas, with a smile. Then assuming a more serious air, 'I possess health, peace of mind, and the affections of a worthy husband; and I should be very undeserving of these blessings, were I to give way to useless regrets, or indulge in impious repinings, because my happiness might once have been more perfect, and still admits of improvement.'

'I don't understand you,' said Lady Juliana, with a peevish yawn, 'Who did you live with in London?'

'With my aunt, Lady Audley."

'With Lady Audley!' repeated her sister-in-law, in accents of astonishment. 'Why, I have heard of her; she lived quite in the world; and gave balls and assemblies; so that's the reason you are not so disagreeable as the rest of them. Why did you not remain with her, or marry an Englishman? but I suppose, like me, you did not know what Scotland was!'

Happy to have excited an interest, even through

the medium of childish curiosity, in the bosom of her fashionable relative, Mrs. Douglas briefly related such circumstances of her past life, as she judged proper to communicate; but as she sought rather to amuse than instruct by her simple narrative, we shall allow her to pursue her charitable intentions, while we do more justice to her character, by introducing her regularly to the acquaintance of our readers.

HISTORY OF MRS. DOUGLAS.

"The selfish heart deserves the pang it feels;
More generous sorrow, while it sinks, exalts,
And conscious virtue mitigates the pain."

YOUNG.

Mrs. Douglas was, on the maternal side, related to an English family. Her mother had died in giving birth to her; and her father, shortly after, falling in the service of his country, she had been consigned in infancy to the care of her aunt. Lady Audley had taken charge of her, on condition, that she should never be claimed by her Scottish relations, for whom that lady entertained as much aversion as contempt. A latent feeling of affection for her departed sister, and a large portion of family pride, had prompted her wish of becoming the protectress of her orphan niece; and possessed of a high sense of rectitude and honour, she fulfilled the duty, thus voluntarily imposed, in a manner that secured the unshaken gratitude of the virtuous Alicia.

Lady Audley was a character more esteemed and feared, than loved, even by those with whom she was most intimate. Firm, upright, and rigid, she exacted from others those inflexible virtues, which in herself she found no obstacle to performing. Neglecting the softer attractions which shed their benign influence over the commerce of social life, she was content to enjoy the extorted esteem of her associates; for friends she had none. She sought in the world for objects to fill up the void which her heart could not supply. She loved eclat, and had

succeeded in creating herself an existence of importance in the circles of high life, which she considered more as due to her consequence, than essential to her enjoyment. She had early in life been left a widow, with the sole tutelage and management of an only son: whose large estate she regulated with the most admirable prudence and judgment.

Alicia Malcolm was put under the care of her aunt at two years of age. A governess had been procured for her, whose character was such as not to impair the promising dispositions of her pupil. Alicia was gifted by nature with a warm affectionate heart, and a calm imagination attempered its influence. Her governess, a woman of a strong understanding and enlarged mind, early instilled into her a deep and strong sense of religion; and to it she owed the support which had safely guided her through the most trying vicissitudes.

When at the age of seventeen, Alicia Malcolm was produced in the world. She was a rational, cheerful, and sweet tempered girl, with a fine formed person, and a countenance in which was so clearly painted the sunshine of her breast, that it attracted the *beinveillance*, even of those who had not taste or judgment to define the charm. Her open natural manner, blending the frankness of the Scotch with the polished reserve of the English woman, her total exemption from vanity, calculated alike to please others, and maintain her own cheerfulness undimmed by a single cloud.

Lady Audley felt for her niece a sentiment which she mistook for affection: her self-approbation was gratified at the contemplation of a being who owed every advantage to her, and whom she had rescued from the coarseness and vulgarity which she deemed inseparable from the manners of every Scotch woman.

If Lady Audley really loved any human being, it was her own son. In him were centered her dearest interests; on his aggrandisement and future importance hung her most sanguine hopes. She had acted contrary to the advice of her male relations, and followed her own judgment, by giving her son a private education. He was brought up under her own eye, by a tutor of deep erudition, but who was totally unfitted for forming the mind, and compensating for those advantages which may be derived from a public education. The circumstances of his education, however, combined rather to stifle the exposure than to destroy the existence of some very dangerous qualities that seemed inherent in Sir Edmund's nature.

He was ardent, impetuous, and passionate, though these propensities were cloked by a reserve, partly natural, and partly arising from the repelling manners of his mother and tutor.

His was not the effervescence of character, which bursts forth on every trivial occasion; but when any powerful cause awakened the slumbering inmates of his breast, they blazed with an uncontrolled fury, that defied all opposition, and overleaped all bounds of reason and decorum.

Experience often shows us, that minds formed of the most opposite attributes, more forcibly attract each other, than those which appear cast in the same mould. The source of this fascination is difficult to trace; it possesses not reason for its basis, yet it is, perhaps, the more tyrannical in its influence from that very cause. The weakness of our natures occasionally makes us feel a potent charm in 'errors of a noble mind.'

Sir Edmund Audley and Alicia Malcolm proved examples of this observation. The affection of children had so gradually ripened into a warmer sentiment, that neither were conscious of the nature of that sentiment till after it had attained strength to

cast a material influence on their after lives. The familiarity of near relatives associating constantly together, produced a warm sentiment of affection, cemented by similarity of pursuits, and enlivened by diversity of character; while the perfect tranquillity of their lives afforded no event that could withdraw the veil of ignorance from their eyes.

Could a woman of Lady Audley's discernment, it may be asked, place two young persons in such a situation, and doubt the consequences? Those who are no longer young are liable to forget that love is a plant of early growth, and that the individuals that they have but a short time before beheld placing their supreme felicity on a rattle and a go-cart, can so soon be actuated by the strongest passions of the human breast.

Sir Edmund completed his nineteenth year, and Alicia entered her eighteenth, when this happy state of unconscious security was destroyed by a circumstance which rent the veil from her eyes, and disclosed his sentiments in all their energy and warmth. This circumstance was no other than a proposal of marriage to Alicia, from a gentleman of large fortune, and brilliant connexions, who resided in their neighbourhood. His character was as little calculated as his appearance, to engage the affections of a young woman of delicacy and good sense. But he was a man of consequence; heir to an earldom; member for the county; and Lady Audley, rejoicing at what she termed Alicia's good fortune, determined that she should become his wife.

With mild firmness she rejected the honour intended her; but it was with difficulty that Lady Audley's mind could adopt or understand the idea of an opposition to her wishes. She could not seriously embrace the conviction, that Alicia was determined to disobey her; and in order to bring her to a right understanding, she underwent a system of persecution, that tended naturally to increase the

antipathy her suitor had inspired. Lady Audley, with the undiscriminating zeal of prejudiced and overbearing persons, strove to recommend him to her niece by all those attributes which were of value in her own eyes; making allowance for a certain degree of indecision in her niece, but never admitting a doubt that in due time her will should be obeyed, as it had always hitherto been.

At this juncture, Sir Edmund came down to the country, and was struck by the altered looks and pensive manners of his once cheerful cousin. About a week after his arrival, he found Alicia one morning in tears, after a long conversation with Lady Audley. Sir Edmund tenderly soothed her, and entreated to be made acquainted with the cause of her distress. She was so habituated to impart every thought to her cousin, the intimacy and sympathy of their souls was so entire, that she would not have concealed the late occurrence from him, had she not been withheld by the natural timidity and delicacy a young woman feels in making her own conquests the subject of conversation. But now so pathetically and irresistibly persuaded by Sir Edmund, and sensible that every distress of hers wounded his heart, Alicia candidly related to him the pursuit of her disagreeable suitor, and the importunities of Lady Audley in his favour. Every word she had spoken had more and more dispelled the mist that had so long hung over Sir Edmund's inclinations. At the first mention of a suitor, he had felt that to be her's, was a happiness that comprised all others; and that the idea of losing her made the whole of existence appear a frightful blank. These feelings were no sooner known to himself, than spontaneously poured into her delighted ears; while she felt that every sentiment met a kindred one in her breast. Alicia sought not a moment to disguise those feelings, which she now, for the first time, became aware of; they were known to the

object of her innocent affection as soon as to herself, and both were convinced, that though not conscious before of the nature of their sentiments, friendship had long been mistaken for love in their hearts.

But this state of blissful serenity did not last long. On the evening of the following day, Lady Audley sent for her to her dressing room. On entering, Alicia was panic struck at her aunt's pale countenance, fiery eyes, and frame convulsed with passion. With difficulty, Lady Audley, struggling for calmness, demanded an instant and decided reply to the proposals of Mr. Compton, the gentleman who had solicited her hand. Alicia entreated her aunt to waive the subject, as she found it impossible ever to consent to such an union.

Scarcely was her answer uttered, when Lady Audley's anger burst forth uncontrollably. She accused her niece of the vilest ingratitude, in having seduced her son from the obedience he owed his mother; of having plotted to ally her base Scotch blood to the noble blood of the Audley's; and, having exhausted every opprobrious epithet, she was forced to stop from want of breath to proceed. As Alicia listened to the cruel unfounded reproaches of her aunt, her spirit rose under the unmerited ill usage, but her conscience absolved her from all intention of injuring or deceiving a human being; and she calmly waited till Lady Audley's anger should have exhausted itself, and then entreated to know what part of her conduct had excited her aunt's displeasure.

Lady Audley's reply was diffuse and intemperate. Alicia gathered from it that her rage had its source in a declaration her son had made to her of his affection for his cousin, and his resolution of marrying her as soon as he was of age. Which open avowal of his sentiments had followed Lady Audley's injunctions to him to forward the suit of Mr. Compton.

That her son, for whom she had in view one of the first matches in the kingdom, should dare to choose for himself, and above all, to choose one whom she considered as much his inferior in birth, as she was in fortune, was a circumstance quite insupportable to her feelings.

Of the existence of love, Lady Audley had little conception; and she attributed her son's conduct to wilful disobedience and obstinacy. In proportion as she had hitherto found him complying and gentle, her wrath had kindled at his present firmness and inflexibility. So bitter were her reflections on his conduct, so severe her animadversions on the being he loved, that Sir Edmund, fired with resentment, expressed his resolution of acting according to the dictates of his own will; and expressed his contempt for her authority, in terms the most unequivocal. Lady Audley, ignorant of the arts of persuasion, by every word she uttered more and more widened the breach her imperiousness had occasioned, until Sir Edmund, feeling himself no longer master of his temper, announced his intention of leaving the house, to allow his mother time to reconcile herself to the inevitable misfortune of beholding him the husband of Alicia Malcolm.

He instantly ordered his horses and departed, leaving the following letter for his cousin.

'I have been compelled, by motives of prudence, of which you are the sole object, to depart without seeing you. My absence became necessary, from the unexpected conduct of Lady Audley, which has led me so near to forgetting that she was my mother, that I dare not remain, and subject myself to excesses of temper, which I might afterwards repent. Two years must elapse before I can become legally my own master, and should Lady Audley so far depart from the dictates of cool judgment, as still to oppose what she knows to be inevitable, I fear that we cannot meet till then. My heart is well known

to you; therefore I need not enlarge on the pain I feel at this unlooked-for separation. At the same time, I am cheered with the prospect of the unspeakable happiness that awaits me—the possession of your hand; and the confidence I feel in your constancy, is in proportion to the certainty I experience in my own; I cannot therefore fear that any of the means which may be put in practice to disunite us, will have more effect on you than on me.

'Looking forward to the moment that shall make you mine forever, I remain with steady confidence, and unspeakable affection, your

'EDMUND AUDLEY.'

With a trembling frame, Alicia handed the note to Lady Audley, and begged leave to retire for a short time; expressing her willingness to reply at another moment to any question her aunt might choose to put to her with regard to her engagement with Sir Edmund.

In the solitude of her own chamber, Alicia gave way to those feelings of wretchedness, which she had with difficulty stifled in the presence of Lady Audley, and bitterly wept over the extinction of her bright and newly formed visions of felicity. To yield to unmerited ill usage, or to crouch beneath imperious and self-arrogated power, was not in the nature of Alicia; and, had Lady Audley been a stranger to her, the path of duty would have been less intricate. However much her own pride might have been wounded, by entering into a family which considered her as an intruding beggar, never would she have consented to sacrifice the virtuous inclinations of the man she loved, to the will of an arrogant and imperious mother. But alas! the case was far different. The recent ill treatment she had experienced from Lady Audley, could not efface from her noble mind the recollection of benefits conferred *from the earliest* period of her life, and of unvarying

attention to her welfare. To her aunt she owed all but existence: she had wholly supported her; bestowed on her the most liberal education; and from Lady Audley sprung every pleasure she had hitherto enjoyed.

Had she been brought up by her paternal relations, she would in all probability never have beheld her cousin; and the mother and son might have lived in uninterrupted concord. Could she be the person to inflict on Lady Audley the severest disappointment she could experience? The thought was too dreadful to bear: and, knowing that procrastination could but increase her misery, no sooner had she felt convinced of the true nature of her duty, than she made a steady resolution to perform and to adhere to it. Lady Audley had *vowed, that while she had life, she would never give her consent and approbation to her son's marriage;* and Alicia was too well-acquainted with her disposition, to have the faintest expectation that she would relent.

But to remain any longer under her protection was impossible; and she resolved to anticipate any proposal of that sort from her protectress.

When Lady Audley's passion had somewhat cooled, she again sent for Alicia. She began by repeating her *eternal enmity* to the marriage, in a manner impressive to the greatest degree; and still more decisive in its form, by the cool collectedness of her manner. She then desired to hear what Alicia had to say in exculpation of her conduct.

The profound sorrow which filled the heart of Alicia, left no room for timidity or indecision. She answered her without hesitation and embarrassment, and asserted her innocence of all deceit, in such a manner as to leave no doubt, at least of honourable proceeding. In a few impressive words, she proved herself sensible of the benefits her aunt had through life conferred upon her; and, while she openly professed to think herself, in the present instance, deep-

ly wronged, she declared her determination of never uniting herself to her cousin without Lady Audley's permission, which she felt convinced was unattainable.

She then proceeded to ask, where she should deem it most adviseable for her to reside in future.

Happy to find her wishes thus prevented, the unfeeling aunt expressed her satisfaction at Alicia's good sense and discretion; represented, in what she thought glowing colours, the unheard of presumption it would have been in her to take advantage of Sir Edmund's momentary infatuation; and then launched out into details of her ambitious views for him in a matrimonial alliance; views which she affected now to consider without obstacle.

Alicia interrupted the painful and unfeeling harangue. It was neither, she said, for Sir Edmund's advantage, nor to gratify his mother's pride, but to perform the dictates of her own conscience, that she had resigned him; she even ventured to declare, that the sharpest pang which that resignation had cost her, was the firm conviction that it would inflict upon him a deep and lasting sorrow.

Lady Audley, convinced that moderate measures would be most likely to ensure a continuation of Alicia's obedience, expressed herself grieved at the necessity of parting with her, and pleased that she should have the good sense to perceive the propriety of such a separation.

Sir Duncan Malcolm, the grandfather of Alicia, had, in the few communications that had passed between Lady Audley and him, always expressed a wish to see his grand-daughter before he died. Her Ladyship's antipathy to Scotland was such, that she would have deemed it absolute contamination for her niece to have entered the country; and she had, therefore, always eluded the request.

It was now, of all plans, the most eligible; and she graciously offered to convey her niece as far as

Edinburgh. The journey was immediately settled; and before Alicia left her aunt's presence, a promise was exacted with unfeeling tenacity, and given with melancholy firmness, never to unite herself to Sir Edmund unsanctioned by his mother.

Alas! how imperfect is human wisdom! even in seeking to do right, how many are the errors we commit! Alicia judged wrong in thus sacrificing the happiness of Sir Edmund to the pride and injustice of his mother; but her error was that of a noble, self-denying spirit, entitled to respect, even though it cannot claim approbation. The honourable open conduct of her niece had so far gained upon Lady Audley, that she did not object to her writing to Sir Edmund, which she did as follows:

LETTER.

'DEAR SIR EDMUND,

'A painful line of conduct is pointed out to me by duty; yet, of all the regrets I feel, not one is so poignant as the consciousness of that which you will feel at learning, that I have for ever resigned the claims you so lately gave me to your heart and hand. It was not weakness—it could not be inconstancy—that produced the painful sacrifice of a distinction, still more gratifying to my heart, than flattering to my pride.

'Need I remind you, that to your mother I owe every benefit in life; nothing can release me from the tribute of gratitude, which would be ill repaid by braving her authority, and despising her will. Should I give her reason to regret the hour she received me under her roof, to repent of every benefit she has hitherto bestowed on me; should I draw down a mother's displeasure, what reasonable hopes could we entertain of solid peace through life? I am not in a situation which entitles me to question the justice of Lady Audley's will; and that will has

pronounced, that I shall never be Sir Edmund's wife.

'Your first impulse may perhaps be, to accuse me of coldness and ingratitude, in quitting the place and country you inhabit, and resigning you back to yourself, without personally taking leave of you; but I trust that you will, on reflection, absolve me from the charge.

'Could I have had any grounds to suppose that a personal interview would be productive of comfort to you, I would have joyfully supported the sufferings it would have inflicted on myself. But question your own heart as to the use you would have made of such a meeting; bear in mind, that Lady Audley has my solemn promise never to be yours —a promise not lightly given—then imagine what must have been an interview between us, under such circumstances.

'In proof of an affection which I can have no reason to doubt, I conjure you to listen to the last request I shall ever make to my dear cousin. Give me the heart-felt satisfaction to know that my departure has put an end to those disagreements between mother and son, of which I have been the innocent cause.

'You have no reason to blame Lady Audley for this last step of mine. I have not been intimidated —threats, believe me, never would have extorted from me a promise to renounce you, had not virtue herself dictated the sacrifice; and my reward will spring from the conviction, that, as far as my judgment could discern, I have acted right.

'Forget, I entreat you, this inauspicious passion. Resolve, like me, to resign yourself, without murmuring, to what is now past recall; and, instead of indulging melancholy, regain, by a timely exertion of mind and body, that serenity which is the portion of those who have obeyed the dictates of rectitude.

'Farewell, Sir Edmund—May every happiness attend your future life: While I strive to forget my ill-fated affection, the still stronger feelings of gratitude and esteem for you can never fade from the heart of

'ALICIA MALCOLM.'

To say that no tears were shed during the composition of this letter, would be to overstrain fortitude beyond natural bounds. With difficulty, Alicia checked the effusions of her pen: she wished to have said much more, and to have soothed the agony of renunciation, by painting with warmth her tenderness and her regret; but reason urged, that, in exciting his feelings and displaying her own, she would defeat the chief purpose of her letter; she hastily closed and directed it, with a feeling almost akin to despair.

The necessary arrangements for the journey having been hastily made, the ladies set out two days after Sir Edmund had so hastily quitted them. The uncomplaining Alicia buried her woes in her own bosom; and neither murmurs on the one hand, nor reproaches on the other, were heard.

At the end of four days, the travellers entered Scotland; and, when they stopped for the night, Alicia, fatigued and dispirited, retired immediately to her apartment.

She had been there but a few minutes, when the chambermaid knocked at the door, and informed her that she was wanted below.

Supposing that Lady Audley had sent for her, she followed the girl without observing that she was conducted in an opposite direction; when, upon entering an apartment, what was her astonishment at finding herself, not in the presence of Lady Audley, but in the arms of Sir Edmund! In the utmost agitation, she sought to disengage herself from

his almost frantic embrace; while he poured forth a torrent of rapturous exclamations, and swore that no human power should ever divide them again.

'I have followed your steps, dearest Alicia, from the moment I received your letter. We are now in Scotland—in this blessed land of liberty. Every thing is arranged; the clergyman is now in waiting; and, in five minutes, you shall be my own beyond the power of fate to sever us.

Too much agitated to reply, Alicia wept in silence; and, in the delight of once more beholding him she had thought never more to behold, forgot for a moment, the duty she had imposed upon herself. But the native energy of her character returned. She raised her head, and attempted to withdraw from the encircling arms of her cousin.

'Never, until you have vowed to be mine! The clergyman—the carriage—every thing is in readiness. Speak but the word, dearest.' And he knelt at her feet.

At this juncture, the door opened, and pale with rage, her eyes flashing fire, Lady Audley stood before them. A dreadful scene now ensued. Sir Edward disdained to enter into any justification of his conduct, or even to reply to the invectives of his mother, but lavished the most tender assiduities on Alicia; who, overcome more by the conflicts of her own heart, than with alarm at Lady Audley's violence, sat the pale and silent image of consternation.

Baffled by her son's indignant disregard, Lady Audley turned all her fury on her niece; and, in the most opprobrious terms that rage could invent, upbraided her with deceit and treachery—accusing her of making her pretended submission instrumental to the more speedy accomplishment of her marriage. Too much incensed to reply, Sir Edmund seized his cousin's hand, and was leading her from the room.

'Go, then—go, marry her, but first hear me swear, solemnly swear!'—and she raised her hand and eyes to heaven—'that my malediction shall be your portion! Speak but the word, and no power shall make me withhold it!'

'Dear Edmund!' exclaimed Alicia, distractedly, 'never ought I to have allowed time for the terrifying words that have fallen from Lady Audley's lips: never for me shall your mother's malediction fall on you. Farewell for ever!' and, with the strength of desperation, she rushed past him, and quitted the room. Sir Edmund madly followed, but in vain. Alicia's feelings were too highly wrought at that moment to be touched even by the man she loved; and, without an additional pang, she saw him throw himself into the carriage which he had destined for so different a purpose, and quit for ever the woman he adored.

It may easily be conceived of how painful a nature must have been the future intercourse betwixt Lady Audley and her niece. The former seemed to regard her victim with that haughty distance which the unrelenting oppressor never fails to entertain towards the object of his tyranny; while even the gentle Alicia, on her part, shrunk, with ill-concealed abhorrence, from the presence of that being whose stern decree had blasted all the fairest blossoms of her happiness.

Alicia was received with affection by her grandfather; and she laboured to drive away the heavy despondency which pressed on her spirits, by studying his taste and humours, and striving to contribute to his comfort and amusement.

Sir Duncan had chosen the time of Alicia's arrival to transact some business; and, instead of returning immediately to the Highlands, he determined to remain some weeks in Edinburgh for her amusement.

But little attractive as dissipation had been, it was now absolutely repugnant to Alicia. She loathed the idea of mixing in scenes of amusement with a heart incapable of joy, a spirit indifferent to every object that surrounded her; and, in solitude alone, she expected gradually to regain her peace of mind.

In the amusements of the gay season of Edinburgh, Alicia expected to find all the vanity, emptiness, and frivolity of London dissipation, without its varied brilliancy, and elegant luxury; yet, so much was it the habit of her mind to look to the fairest side of things, and to extract some advantage from every situation in which she was placed, that, pensive and thoughtful as was her disposition, the discriminating only perceived her deep dejection, while all admired her benevolence of manner, and unaffected desire to please.

By degrees, Alicia found that, in some points, she had been inaccurate in her idea of the style of living of those who form the best society of Edinburgh. The circle is so confined, that its members are almost universally known to each other; and those various gradations of gentility, from the cit's snug party to the dutchess' most crowded assembly, all totally distinct and separate, which are to be met with in London, have no prototype in Edinburgh. There, the ranks and fortunes being more on an equality, no one is able greatly to exceed his neighbour in luxury and extravagance. Great magnificence, and the consequent gratification produced by the envy of others being out of the question, the object for which a reunion of individuals was originally invented, becomes less of a secondary consideration. Private parties for the actual purpose of society and conversation are frequent, and answer the destined end; and, in the societies of professed amusement, are to be met the learned, the studious, and the rational; not presented as shows to the com-

pany by the host and hostess, but professedly seeking their own gratification.

Still the lack of beauty, fashion, and elegance, disappoint the stranger accustomed to their brilliant combination in a London world. But Alicia had long since sickened in the metropolis at frivolity of beauty, the heartlessness of fashion, and the insipidity of elegance; and it was a relief to her to turn to the variety of character she found beneath the cloak of simple, eccentric, and sometimes coarse manners.

We are never long so totally abstracted by our own feelings, as to be unconscious of the attempts of others to please us. In Alicia, to be conscious of it, and to be grateful, was the same movement. Yet she was sensible, that so many persons could not, in that short period, have became seriously interested in her. The observation did not escape her, how much an English stranger is looked up to for fashion and taste in Edinburgh, though possessing little merit, save that of being English; yet she felt gratified and thankful for the kindness and attention that greeted her appearance on all sides.

Amongst the many who expressed good will towards Alicia, there were a few whose kindness and real affection failed not to meet with a return from her; and others, whose rich and varied powers of mind, for the first time, afforded her a true specimen of the exalting enjoyment produced by a communion of intellect. She felt the powers of her understanding enlarge in proportion; and, with this mental activity, she sought to solace the languor of her heart, and save it from the listlessness of despair.

Alicia had been about six weeks in Edinburgh, when she received a letter from Lady Audley. No allusions were made to the past; she wrote upon general topics, in the cold manner that might be

used to a common acquaintance; and slightly named her son as having set out upon a tour to the Continent.

Alicia's heart was heavy, as she read the heartless letter of the woman, whose cruelty had not been able to eradicate wholly from her breast, the strong durable affection of early habit.

Sir Duncan and Alicia spent two months in Edinburgh, at the end of which time they went to his country seat in ——shire. The adjacent country was picturesque; and Sir Duncan's residence, though bearing marks of the absence of taste and comfort in its arrangements, possessed much natural beauty.

Two years of tranquil seclusion had passed over her head, when her dormant feelings were all aroused by a letter from Sir Edmund. It informed her, that he was now of age; that his affection remained unalterable; that he was newly arrived from abroad; and that, notwithstanding the death-blow she had given to his hopes, he could not refrain, on returning to his native land, from assuring her, that he was resolved never to pay his addresses to any other woman. He concluded by declaring his intention of presenting himself at once to Sir Duncan, and soliciting his permission to claim her hand; when all scruples relating to Lady Audley must, from her change of abode, be at an end.

Alicia read the letter with grateful affection and poignant regret. Again she shed the bitter tears of disappointment, at the hard task of refusing for a second time so noble and affectionate a heart. But conscience whispered, that, to hold a passive line of conduct, would be, in some measure, to deceive Lady Audley's expectations; and she felt, with exquisite anguish, that she had no means to put a final stop to Sir Edmund's pursuits, and to her own trials, but by bestowing her hand on another. The first dawning of this idea was accompanied by the

most violent burst of anguish; but, far from driving away the painful subject, she strove to render it less appalling by dwelling upon it, and labouring to reconcile herself to what seemed her only plan of conduct. She acknowledged to herself, that, to remain still single, a prey to Sir Edmund's importunities, and the continual temptations of her own heart, was, for the sake of present indulgence, submitting to a fiery ordeal, from which she could not escape unblameable without the most repeated and agonizing conflicts.

Three months still remained for her of peace and liberty, after which Sir Duncan would go to Edinburg. There she would be sure of meeting with the loved companion of her youthful days; and the lurking weakness of her own breast would then be seconded by the passionate eloquence of the being she most loved and admired upon earth.

She wrote to him, repeating her former arguments; declaring that she could never feel herself absolved from the promise she had given Lady Audley, but by that Lady herself, and imploring him to abandon a pursuit which would be productive only of lasting pain to both.

Her arguments, her representations, all failed in their effect on Sir Edmund's impetuous character. His answer was short and decided; the purport of it, that he should see her in Edinburgh the moment she arrived there.

'My fate then is fixed,' thought Alicia as she read this letter. 'I must finish the sacrifice.'

The more severe had been the struggle between love and victorious duty, the more firmly was she determined to maintain this dear-bought victory.

Alicia's resolution of marrying was now decided, and the opportunity was not wanting. She had become acquainted, during the preceding winter, in Edinburgh, with Major Douglas, eldest son of Mr.

Douglas of Glenfern. He had then paid her the most marked attention; and, since her return to the country, had been a frequent visitor at Sir Duncan's. At length he avowed his partiality, which was heard by Sir Duncan with pleasure; by Alicia with dread and submission. Yet she felt less repugnance towards him than to any other of her suitors. He was pleasing in his person; quiet and simple in his manners; and his character stood high for integrity, good temper, and plain sense. The sequel requires little further detail. Alicia Malcolm became the wife of Archibald Douglas.

An eternal constancy is a thing so rare to be met with, that persons who desire that sort of reputation, strive to obtain it by nourishing the ideas that recal the passion, even though guilt and sorrow should go hand in hand with it. But Alicia, far from piqueing herself in the lovelorn pensiveness she might have assumed, had she yielded to the impulse of her feelings, diligently strove, not only to make up her mind to the lot which had devolved to her, but to bring it to such a frame of cheerfulness, as should enable her to contribute to her husband's happiness.

When the soul is no longer buffeted by the storms of hope or fear, when all is fixed unchangeably for life, sorrow for the past will never long prey on a pious and well-regulated mind. If Alicia lost the buoyant spirit of youth, the bright and quick play of fancy, yet a placid contentment crowned her days; and, at the end of two years, she would have been astonished had any one marked her as an object of compassion.

She scarcely ever heard from Lady Audley; and, in the few letters her aunt had favoured her with, she gave favourable, though vague accounts of her son. Alicia did not court a more unreserved communication, and had long since taught herself to hope that he was now happy. Soon after their

marriage, Major Douglas quitted the army, upon succeeding to a small estate on the banks of Lochmarlie by the death of an uncle; and there, in the calm seclusion of domestic life, Mrs. Douglas found that peace which might have been denied her amid gayer scenes.

CHAPTER XIV.

"And joyous was the scene in early summer."

MADOC.

On Henry's return from his solitary ramble, Mrs. Douglas learnt from him the cause of the misunderstanding that had taken place; and judging that, in the present state of affairs, a temporary separation might be of use to both parties, as they were now about to return home, she proposed to her husband to invite his brother and Lady Juliana to follow and spend a few weeks with them at Lochmarlie cottage.

The invitation was eagerly accepted; for though Lady Juliana did not anticipate any positive pleasure from the change, still she thought that every place must be more agreeable than her present abode, especially as she stipulated for the utter exclusion of the aunts from the party. To atone for this mortification, Miss Becky was invited to fill the vacant seat in the carriage; and, accordingly, with a cargo of strong shoes, great coats, and a large work-bag well stuffed with white-seam, she took her place at the appointed hour.

The day they had chosen for their expedition was one that 'sent a summer feeling to the heart.'

The air was soft and genial; not a cloud stained the bright azure of the heavens; and the sun shone out in all his splendour, shedding life and beauty even over all the desolate heath-clad hills of Glenfern. But, after they had journeyed a few miles,

suddenly emerging from the valley, a scene of matchless beauty burst at once upon the eye. Before them lay the dark blue waters of Lochmarlie, reflecting, as in a mirror, every surrounding object, and bearing on its placid transparent bosom a fleet of herring boats, the drapery of whose black suspended nets, contrasted with picturesque effect the white sails of the larger vessels, which were vainly spread to catch a breeze. All around, rocks, meadows, woods, and hills, mingled in wild and lovely irregularity.

On a projecting point of land stood a little fishing village; its white cottages reflected in the glassy waters that almost surrounded it. On the opposite side of the lake, or rather estuary, embosomed in wood, rose the lofty turrets of Lochmarlie Castle; while here and there, perched on some mountain's brow, were to be seen the shepherd's lonely hut, and the heath-covered summer shealing.

Not a breath was stirring, not a sound was heard save the rushing of a waterfall, the tinkling of some silver rivulet, or the calm rippling of the tranquil lake; now and then, at intervals, the fisherman's Gaelic ditty chanted, as he lay stretched on the sand in some sunny nook; or the shrill distant sound of childish glee. How delicious to the feeling heart to behold so fair a scene of unsophisticated nature, and to listen to her voice alone, breathing the accents of innocence and joy!

But none of the party who now gazed on it, had minds capable of being touched with the emotions it was calculated to inspire.

Henry, indeed, was rapturous in his expressions of admiration; but he concluded his panegyrics by wondering his brother did not keep a cutter, and resolving to pass a night on board one of the herring boats, that he might eat the fish in perfection.

Lady Juliana thought it might be very pretty, if,

instead of those frightful rocks and shabby cottages, there could be villas, and gardens, and lawns, and conservatories, and summer-houses, and statues.

Miss Becky observed, if it was hers, she would cut down the woods, and level the hills, and have races.

The road wound along the sides of the lake, sometimes overhung with banks of natural wood, which, though scarcely budding, grew so thick as to exclude the prospect; in other places, surmounted by large masses of rock, festooned with ivy, and embroidered by mosses of a thousand hues that glittered under the little mountain streamlets. Two miles further on stood the simple mansion of Mr. Douglas. It was situated in a wild sequestered nook, formed by a little bay at the further end of the lake. On three sides, it was surrounded by wooded hills, that offered a complete shelter from every nipping blast. To the south, the lawn, sprinkled with trees and shrubs, sloped gradually down to the water.

At the door, they were met by Mrs. Douglas, who welcomed them with the most affectionate cordiality, and conducted them into the house through a little circular hall, filled with flowering shrubs and foreign plants.

'How delightful!' exclaimed Lady Juliana as she stopped to inhale the rich fragrance: 'Moss roses! I do delight in them,' twisting off a rich cluster of flowers and buds in token of her affection: 'and I quite doat upon Heliotrope,' gathering a handful of flowers as she spoke. Then extending her hand towards a most luxuriant Cape jessamine—

'I must really petition you to spare this, my favourite child,' said her sister-in-law, as she gently withheld her arm; 'and, to tell you the truth, dear Lady Juliana, you have already infringed the rules of my little conservatory, which admit only of the gratification of two senses—seeing and smelling.'

'What! don't you like your flowers to be gathered?' exclaimed Lady Juliana, in a tone of surprise and disappointment; 'I don't know any other use they're of. What quantities I used to have from Papa's hot houses!'

Mrs. Douglas made no reply: but conducted her to the drawing-room, where her chagrin was dispelled by the appearance of comfort and even elegance that it bore. 'Now, this is really what I like,' cried she, throwing herself on one of the couches; 'a large fire, open windows, quantities of roses, comfortable Ottomans, and pictures; only what a pity you haven't a larger mirror.'

Mrs. Douglas now rang for refreshments, and apologized for the absence of her husband, who, she said, was so much interested in his ploughing, that he seldom made his appearance till sent for.

Henry then proposed that they should all go out and surprise his brother; and though walking in the country formed no part of Lady Juliana's amusements, yet, as Mrs. Douglas assured her the walks were perfectly dry, and her husband was so pressing, she consented. The way lay through a shrubbery, by the side of a brawling brook, whose banks retained all the wildness of unadorned nature. Moss, and ivy, and fern, clothed the ground; and, under the banks, the young primroses and violets began to raise their heads; while the red wintry berry still hung thick on the hollies.

'This is really very pleasant,' said Henry, stopping to contemplate a view of the lake through the branches of a weeping birch, 'the sound of the stream, and the singing of the birds, and all those wild flowers, make it appear as if it was summer in this spot; and only look, Julia, how pretty that wherry looks lying at anchor.' Then whispering to her, 'What would you think of such a desert as this, with the man of your heart?'

Lady Juliana made no reply, but by complaining

of the heat of the sun, the hardness of the gravel, and the damp from the water.

Henry, who now began to look upon the condition of a Highland farmer with more complacency than formerly, was confirmed in his favourable sentiments at sight of his brother, following the primitive occupation of the plough, his fine face glowing with health, and lighted up with good humour and happiness. He hastily advanced towards the party, and shaking his brother and sister-in-law most warmly by the hand, expressed, with all the warmth of a good heart, the pleasure he had in receiving them at his house:—then observing Lady Juliana's languid air, and imputing to fatigue of body what, in fact, was the consequence of mental vacuity, he proposed returning home by a shorter road than that by which they had come. Henry was again in raptures at the new beauties this walk presented, and at the high order and neatness in which the grounds were kept.

'This must be a very expensive place of yours, though,' said he, addressing his sister-in-law; 'there is so much garden and shrubbery, and such a number of rustic bridges, bowers, and so forth: it must require half a dozen men to keep it in any order.'

'Such an establishment would very ill accord with our moderate means,' replied she; 'we do not pretend to one regular gardener; and had our little embellishments been productive of much expense, or tending solely to my gratification, I should never have suggested them. When we first took possession of this spot, it was a perfect wilderness, with a dirty farm-house on it: nothing but mud about the doors, nothing but wood, and briars, and brambles beyond it; and the village presented a still more melancholy scene of rank luxuriance, in its swarms of dirty idle girls, and mischievous boys. I have generally found, that wherever an evil exists, the re-

medy is not far off; and in this case, it was strikingly obvious. It was only engaging these ill-directed children, by trifling rewards, to apply their lively energies in improving instead of destroying the works of nature, as had formerly been their zealous practice. In a short time, the change on the moral as well as the vegetable part of creation became very perceptible: the children grew industrious and peaceable; and, instead of destroying trees, robbing nests, and worrying cats, the bigger boys, under Douglas' direction, constructed these wooden bridges and seats, or cut out and gravelled the little winding paths that we had previously marked out. The task of keeping every thing in order is now easy, as you may believe, when I tell you the whole of our pleasure-grounds, as you are pleased to term them, receive no other attention than what is bestowed by children under twelve years of age. And now having, I hope, acquitted myself of the charge of extravagance, I ought to beg Lady Juliana's pardon for this long, and, I fear, tiresome detail.'

Having now reached the house, Mrs. Douglas conducted her guest to the apartment prepared for her; while the brothers pursued their walk.

As long as novelty retained its power, and the comparison between Glenfern and Lochmarlie was fresh in remembrance, Lady Juliana, charmed with every thing, was in high good humour.

But as the horrors of the one were forgotten and the comforts of the other became familiar, the demon of *ennui* again took possession of her vacant mind; and she relapsed into all her capricious humours and childish impertinences. The harpsicord, which, on her first arrival, she had pronounced to be excellent, was now declared quite shocking; so much out of tune, that there was no possibility of playing upon it. The small collection of well-chosen novels

she soon exhausted, and then they became 'the stupidest books she had ever read;' the smell of the Heliotrope now gave her the head-ache; the sight of the lake made her sea-sick.

Mrs. Douglas heard all these civilities in silence; and much more 'in sorrow than in anger.' In the wayward inclinations, variable temper, and wretched inanity of this poor victim of indulgence, she beheld the sad fruits of a fashionable education; and thought, with humility, that, under similar circumstances, such might have been her own character.

'Oh, what an awful responsibility do those parents incur,' she would mentally exclaim, 'who thus neglect or corrupt the noble deposit of an immortal soul! And who, alas! can tell where the mischief may end. This unfortunate will herself become a mother; yet wholly ignorant of the duties, incapable of the self-denial of that sacred office, she will bring into the world creatures to whom she can only transmit her errors and her weaknesses!'

These reflections at times deeply affected the generous heart and truly Christian spirit of Mrs. Douglas; and she sought, by every means in her power, to restrain those faults, which she knew it would be vain to attempt eradicating.

To diversify the routine of days which grew more and more tedious to Lady Juliana, the weather being remarkably fine, many little excursions were made to the nearest country seats; which, though they did not afford her any actual pleasure, answered the purpose of consuming a considerable portion of her time.

Several weeks passed away, during which little inclination was shown on the part of the guests to quit their present residence; when Mr. and Mrs. Douglas were summoned to attend the sick-bed of

Sir Duncan Malcolm; and though they pressed their guests to remain during their absence, yet Henry felt that it would be highly offensive to his father were they to do so, and therefore resolved immediately to return to Glenfern.

CHAPTER XV.

"They steeked doors, they steeked yetts,
Close to the cheek and chin;
They steeked them a' but a little wicket,
And Lammikin crap in.

Now quhere's the lady of this castle?"

Old Ballad.

The party were received with the loudest acclamations of joy by the good old ladies; and even the laird seemed to have forgotten that his son had refused to breed black cattle, and that his daughter-in-law was above the management of her household.

The usual salutations were scarcely over, when Miss Grizzy, flying to her little writing-box, pulled out a letter, and, with an air of importance, having adjusted silence, she read as follows:

LETTER.

Lochmarlie Castle,
March, 27, 17—.

DEAR CUTTY,

'Sir Sampson's stomach has been as bad as it could well be, but not so bad as your roads, for was shook to a jelly. My petticoat will never do. Mrs. M'Hall has had a girl. I wonder what makes people have girls; they never come to good: boys may go to the mischief, and be good for something—if girls go, they're good for nothing I know of. I never saw such roads. I

suppose Glenfern means to bury you all in the high-way—there are holes enough to make you graves, and stones big enough for coffins. You must all come, and spend Tuesday here—not all, but some of you—you, dear child, and your brother, and a sister, and your pretty niece, and handsome nephew —I love handsome people.—Miss M'Kraken has bounced away with her father's footman—I hope he will clean his knives on her. Come early, and come dressed, to your loving friend,

'ISABELLA MACLAUGHLAN.'

The letter ended, a volley of applause ensued, which at length gave place to consultation. 'Of course, we all go—at least as many as the carriage will hold: we have no engagements, and there can be no objections.'

Lady Juliana had already frowned a contemptuous refusal, but in due time it was changed to a sullen assent, at the pressing entreaties of her husband, to whom any place was now preferable to home. In truth, the mention of a party had more weight with her than either her husband's wishes or her aunt's remonstrances; and they had assured her, that she should meet with a large assemblage of the very first company at Lochmarlie Castle.

The day appointed for the important visit arrived; and it was arranged that two of the elder ladies, and one of the young ones, should accompany Lady Juliana in her barouche, which Henry was to drive.

At peep of dawn the ladies were a-stir, and at eight o'clock breakfast was hurried over, that they might begin the preparations necessary for appearing with dignity at the shrine of this their patron saint. At eleven they re-appeared in all the majesty of sweeping silk-trains, and well-powdered toupees. In outward show, Miss Becky was not less elaborate: the united strength and skill of her three aunts and four sisters, had evidently been exerted

in forcing her hair into every position, but that for which nature had intended it. Curls stood on end around her forehead, and tresses were dragged up from the roots, and formed into a knob on the crown; her arms had been strapped back till her elbows met, by means of a pink riband of no ordinary strength or doubtful hue.

Three hours were passed in all the anguish of full dressed impatience; an anguish in which every female breast must be ready to sympathise. But Lady Juliana sympathised in no one's distresses but her own, and the difference of waiting in high dress or in *dishabille*, was a distinction to her inconceivable. But those to whom *to be dressed* is an event! will readily enter into the feelings of the ladies in question, as they sat, walked, wondered, exclaimed, opened windows, wrung their hands, adjusted their dress, &c. &c. during the three tedious hours they were doomed to wait the appearance of their niece.

Two o'clock came, and with it Lady Juliana, as if purposely to testify her contempt, in a loose morning dress and mob cap. The sisters looked blank with disappointment; for having made themselves mistresses of the contents of her Ladyship's wardrobe, they had settled amongst themselves that the most suitable dress for the occasion would be black velvet, and accordingly many hints had been given the preceding evening on the virtues of black velvet gowns; they were warm, and not too warm; they were dressy, and not too dressy; Lady Maclaughlan was a great admirer of black velvet gowns; she had one herself with long sleeves, and that buttoned behind, black velvet gowns were very much wore; they knew several ladies who had them; and they were certain, there would be nothing else wore amongst the matrons at Lady Maclaughlan's, &c. &c.

Time was however too precious to be given either to remonstrance or lamentation. Miss Jacky could only give an angry look, and Miss Grizzy a sorrow-

ful one, as they hurried away to the carriage, uttering exclamations of despair at the lateness of the hour, and the impossibility that any body could have time to dress, after getting to Lochmarlie Castle.

The consequence of the delay was, that it was dark by the time they reached the place of destination. The carriage drove up to the grand entrance; but neither lights nor servants greeted their arrival; and no answer was returned to the ringing of the bell.

'This is most alarming, I declare!' cried Miss Grizzy.

'It is quite incomprehensible!' observed Miss Jacky. 'We had best get out, and try the back door.'

The party alighted, and another attack being made upon the rear, it met with better success; for a little boy now presented himself at a narrow opening of the door, and in a strong Highland accent, demanded 'wha tha war seekin.'

'Lady Maclaughlan, to be sure, Colin,' was the reply.

'Weel, weel,' still refusing admittance;' but the laddie's no to be spoken wi' to night.'

'Not to be spoken with!' exclaimed Miss Grizzy, almost sinking to the ground with apprehension. 'Good gracious!—I hope!—I declare!—Sir Sampson!——'

'Oo aye, hur may see Lochmarlie hursel.' Then opening the door, he led the way, and ushered them into the presence of Sir Sampson, who was reclining in an easy chair, arrayed in a *robe-de-chambre* and night-cap. The opening of the door seemed to have broken his slumber; for gazing around with a look of stupefaction, he demanded, in a sleepy peevish tone, 'Who was there?'

'Bless me, Sir Sampson!' exclaimed both spinsters at once, darting forward and seizing a hand;

'Bless me, don't you know us! and here is our niece, Lady Juliana.'

'My Lady Juliana Douglas!' cried he, with a shriek of horror, sinking again upon his cushions—'I am betrayed—I—where is my Lady Maclaughlan?—Where is Philistine?—Where is—the devil! This is not to be borne! My Lady Juliana Douglas, the Earl of Courtland's daughter, to be introduced to Lochmarlie Castle in so vile a manner, and myself surprised in so indecorous a situation!' And his lips quivering with passion, he rang the bell.

The summons was answered by the same attendant that had acted as gentleman usher.

'Where are all my people?' demanded his incensed master.

'Hurs aw awa tull ta Sandy More's.'

'Where is my Lady?'

'Hurs i' ta teach tap.'*

'Where's is Murdoch?'

'Hurs helpin ta leddie i' ta teach tap.'

'O, we'll all go up stairs, and see what Lady Maclaughlan and Philistine are about in the laboratory,' said Miss Grizzy. 'So pray, just go on with your nap, Sir Sampson; we shall find the way—don't stir;' and taking Lady Juliana by the hand, away tripped the spinsters in search of their friend. 'I cannot conceive the meaning of all this,' whispered Miss Grizzy to her sister as they went along. 'Something must be wrong; but I said nothing to dear Sir Sampson, his nerves are so easily agitated. But what can be the meaning of all this? I declare it's quite a mystery?'

After ascending several long dark stairs, and following divers windings and turnings, the party at length reached the door of the *sanctum sanctorum*,

* House top.

and having gently tapped, the voice of the priestess was heard in no very encouraging accents, demanding, 'Who's there?'

'It's only us,' replied her trembling friend.

'Only us! humph! I wonder what fool is called *only us!* Open the door, Philistine, and see what *only us* wants.'

The door was opened, and the party entered. The day was closing in, but by the faint twilight that mingled with the gleams from a smoky smouldering fire, Lady Maclaughlan was dimly discernible, as she stood upon the hearth, watching the contents of an enormous kettle, that emitted both steam and odour. She regarded the invaders with her usual marble aspect, and without moving either joint or muscle as they drew near.

'I declare—I don't think you know us, Lady Maclaughlan,' said Miss Grizzy, in a tone of affected vivacity, with which she strove to conceal her agitation.

'Know you!' repeated her friend—'humph! Who you are, I know very well; but what brings you here, I do *not* know. Do you know yourselves?'

'I declare—I can't conceive—' began Miss Grizzy; but her trepidation arrested her speech, and her sister therefore proceeded—

'Your Ladyship's declaration is no less astonishing than incomprehensible. We have waited upon you by your own express invitation on the day appointed by yourself, and we have been received in a manner, I must say, we did not expect, considering this is the first visit of our niece Lady Juliana Douglas.'

'I'll tell you what, girls,' replied their friend, as she still stood with her back to the fire, and her hands behind her; 'I'll tell you what,—you are not yourselves—you are all lost—quite mad—that's all —humph!'

'If that's the case, we cannot be fit company for your Ladyship,' retorted Miss Jacky warmly; 'and therefore the best thing we can do, is to return the way we came: Come, Lady Juliana—come, sister.'

'I declare, Jacky, the impetuosity of your temper is—I really cannot stand it—' and the gentle Grizzy gave way to a flood of tears.

'You used to be rational, intelligent creatures,' resumed her Ladyship; 'but what has come over you, I don't know. You come tumbling in here at the middle of the night—and to the top of the house—nobody knows how—when I was never thinking of you; and because I don't tell a parcel of lies, and pretend I expected you, you are for flying off again—humph! Is this the behaviour of women in their senses?' But, since you are here, you may as well sit down, and say what brought you. Get down Gil Blas—go along Tom Jones,' addressing two huge cats, who occupied a three-cornered leather chair by the fire side, and who relinquished it with much reluctance.

'How do you do, pretty creature?' kissing Lady Juliana, as she seated her in this cat's cradle. 'Now, girls, sit down, and tell what brought you here to-day—humph!'

'Can your Ladyship ask such a question, after having formally invited us?' demanded the wrathful Jacky.

'I'll tell you what, girls, you were just as much invited by me to dine here to day, as you were appointed to sup with the Grand Seignior—humph!'

'What day of the week does your Ladyship call this?'

'I call it Tuesday; but I suppose the Glenfern calendar calls it Thursday: Thursday was the day I invited you to come.'

'I'm sure—I'm thankful we're got to the bottom of it at last,' cried Miss Grizzy; 'I read it, because *I'm sure* you wrote it, Tuesday.'

'How could you be such a fool, my love, as to read it any such thing? Even if it had been written Tuesday, you might have had the sense to know it meant Thursday. When did you know me invite any body for a Tuesday?'

'I declare it's very true; I certainly ought to have known better. I am quite confounded at my own stupidity; for, as you observe, even though you had said Tuesday, I might have known that you must have meant Thursday.'

'Well, well, no more about it: Since you are here, you must stay here, and you must have something to eat, I suppose. Sir Sampson and I have dined two hours ago; but you shall have your dinner for all that. I must shut shop for this day, it seems, and leave my resuscitating tincture all in the dead-thraw—Methusalem pills quite in their infancy. But there's no help for it: Since you are here, you must stay here, and you must be fed and lodged: so get along, girls, get along. Here, Gil Blas—come, Tom Jones.' And, preceded by her cats, and followed by her guests, she led the way to the parlour.

CHAPTER XVI.

"Point de milieu: l'hymen et ses liens
Sont les plus grands ou des maux ou des biens."
L'Enfant Prodigue.

On returning to the parlour, they found Sir Sampson had, by means of the indefatigable Philistine, been transported into a suit of regimentals, and well powdered peruke, which had, in some measure, restored him to his usual complacency. Henry, who had gone in quest of some person to take charge of the horses, now entered; and shortly after a tray of provisions was brought, which the half-famished party eagerly attacked, regardless of their hostess' admonitions to eat sparingly, as nothing was so dangerous as eating heartily when people were hungry.

The repast being at length concluded, Lady Maclaughlan led her guests into the saloon. They passed through an anti-chamber, which seemed, by the faint light of the lamp, to contain nothing but piles on piles of china, and entered the room of state.

The eye at first wandered in uncertain obscurity; and the guests cautiously proceeded over a bare oaken floor, whose dark polished surface seemed to emulate a mirror, through an apartment of formidable extent. The walls were hung with rich, but grotesque, tapestry. The ceiling, by its height and massy carving, bespoke the age of the apartment; but the beauty of the design was lost in the gloom.

A Turkey carpet was placed in the middle of the floor; and, on the middle of the carpet, stood the

card table, at which two footmen, hastily summoned from the revels at Sandy Moore's, were placing chairs and cards; seemingly eager to display themselves, as if to prove that they were always at their posts.

Cards were a matter of course with Sir Sampson and his lady; but, as whist was the only game they ever played, a difficulty arose as to the means of providing amusement for the younger part of the company.

'I have plenty of books for you, my loves,' said Lady Maclaughlan; and, taking one of the candles, she made a journey to the other end of the room, and entered a small turret, from which her voice was heard issuing most audibly, 'All the books that should ever have been published are here. Read these, and you need read no more: all the world's in these books—humph! Here's the Bible, great and small, with apocrypha and concordance! Here's Floyer's Medicina Gerocomica, or, the Galenic Art of preserving Old Men's Health;—Love's Art of Surveying and Measuring Land;—Transactions of the Highland Society;—Glass' Cookery;—Flavel's Fountain of Life Opened;—Fencing Familiarized;—Observations on the use of Bath Waters;—Cure for Soul Sores;—De Blondt's Military Memoirs;—Mac-Ghie's Book-keeping;—Mead on pestilence;—Astenthology, or the Art of preserving Feeble Life!'

As she enumerated the contents of her library, she paused at the end of each title, in hopes of hearing the book called for; but she was allowed to proceed without interruption to the end of her catalogue.

'Why! what would you have, children?' cried she in one of her sternest accents. 'I don't know! Do you know yourselves? Here are two novels, the only ones worth any Christian's reading.'

Henry gladly accepted the first volumes of Gil Blas, and Clarissa Harlowe; and, giving the latter

to Lady Juliana, began the other himself. Miss Becky was settled with her hands across and the whist party being arranged, a solemn silence ensued.

Lady Juliana turned over a few pages of her own book, then begged Henry would exchange with her, but both were in so different a style from the French and German school she had been accustomed to, that they were soon relinquished in disappointment and disgust.

On the table, which had been placed by the fire for her accommodation, lay an English Newspaper, and to that she had recourse, as a last effort at amusement. But, alas! even the dullness of Clarissa Harlowe was delight, compared to the anguish with which this fatal paper was fraught, in the shape of the following paragraph, which presented itself to the unfortunate fair one's eye.

'Yesterday was married, by special license, at the house of Mrs. D——, his Grace the Duke of L——, to the beautiful and accomplished Miss D——. His Royal Highness the Duke of —— was gracious enough to act as father to the bride upon this occasion, and was present in person, as were their Royal Highnesses the Dukes of ——, and of ——. The bride looked most bewitchingly lovely, in a simple robe of the finest Mechlin lace, with a superb veil of the same costly material, which hung down to her feet. She wore a set of pearls estimated at thirty thousand pounds, whose chaste elegance corresponded with the rest of the dress. Immediately after the ceremony, they partook of a sumptuous collation: and the happy pair set off in a chariot and four, attended by six out-riders, and two coaches and four.

'After spending the honey-moon at his Grace's unique villa on the Thames, their Graces will receive company at their splendid mansion in Portman Square. The wedding paraphernalia is said to have

cost ten thousand pounds. and her Grace's jewel-box is estimated at little less than half a million.'

Wretched as Lady Juliana had long felt herself to be, her former state of mind was positive happiness compared to what she now endured. Envy, regret, self-reproach, and resentment, all struggled in the breast of the self-devoted beauty, while the paper dropped from her hand, and she cast a fearful glance around, as if to ascertain the reality of her fate. The dreadful certainty smote her with a sense of wretchedness, too acute to be suppressed; and, darting a look of horror at her unconscious husband, she threw herself back in her chair, while the scalding tears of envy, anger, and repentance, fell from her eyes.

Accustomed as Henry now was to these ebullitions of *feeling* from his beauteous partner, he was not yet so indifferent as to behold them unmoved; and he sought to sooth her by the kindest expressions, and most tender epithets. These, indeed, had long since ceased to charm away the lady's ill humour, but they sometimes succeeded in mollifying it. But now, their only effect seemed to be increasing the irritation, as she turned from all her husband's inquiries, and impatiently withdrew her hands from his.

Astonished at a conduct so incomprehensible, Douglas earnestly besought an explanation.

'There!' cried she, at length, pushing the paper towards him: 'see there what I might have been but for you; and then compare it with what you have made me!'

Confounded by this reproach, Henry eagerly snatched up the paper, and his eye instantly fell on the fatal paragraph; the poisoned dart that struck the death-blow to all that now remained to him of happiness—the fond idea that, even amidst childish folly, and capricious estrangement, still, in the main, he was beloved! With a quivering lip, and cheek

blanched with mortification and indignant contempt, he laid down the paper; and, without casting a look upon, or uttering a word to, his once *adored and adoring Juliana*, quitted the apartment in all that bitterness of spirit, which a generous nature must feel, when it first discovers the fallacy of a cherished affection. Henry had, indeed, ceased to regard his wife with the ardour of romantic passion; nor had the solid feelings of affectionate esteem supplied its place: but he loved her still, because he believed himself the engrossing object of her tenderness: and, in that blest delusion, he had hitherto found palliatives for her folly, and consolation for all his own distresses.

To indifference he might for a time have remained insensible; because, though his feelings were strong, his perceptions were not acute. But the veil of illusion was now rudely withdrawn. He beheld himself detested where he imagined himself adored; and the anguish of disappointed affection was heightened by the stings of wounded pride, and deluded self-love.

CHAPTER XVII.

"What's done, cannot be undone; to bed, to bed, to bed!"
Exit Lady Macbeth.

The distance at which the whist party had placed themselves, and the deep interest in which their senses were involved, while the fate of the odd trick was pending, had rendered them insensible to the scene that was acting at the other extremity of the apartment. The task of administering succour to the afflicted fair one therefore devolved upon Miss Becky, whose sympathetic powers never had been called into action before. Slowly approaching the wretched Lady Juliana as she lay back in her chair, the tears coursing each other down her cheeks, she tendered her a smelling bottle, to which her own nose, and the noses of her sisters, were wont to be applied, whenever, as they choicely expressed it, they wanted a 'fine smell.' But, upon this trying occasion, she went still further: She unscrewed the stopper, unfolded a cotton handkerchief, upon which she poured a few drops of lavender water, and offered it to her Ladyship, deeming that the most elegant and efficient manner in which she could afford relief. But the well-meant offering was silently waved off; and poor Miss Becky, having done all that the light of reason suggested to her, retreated to her seat, wondering what it was her fine sister-in law would be at.

By the time the rubber was ended, her Ladyship's fears of Lady Maclaughlan had enabled her to conquer her feelings so far, that they had now sunk in-

to a state of sullen dejection, which the good aunts eagerly interpreted into the fatigue of the journey. Miss Grizzy declaring, that although the drive was most delightful—nobody could deny that—and they all enjoyed it excessively, as indeed every body must who had eyes in their head; yet she must own, at the same time, that she really felt as if all her bones were broke.

A general rising therefore took place at an early hour, and Lady Juliana, attended by all the females of the party, was ushered into the chamber of state, which was fitted up in a style acknowledged to be truly magnificent, by all who had ever enjoyed the honour of being permitted to gaze on its white velvet bed curtains, surmounted by the family arms, and gracefully tucked up by hands *sinister-couped* at the wrists, &c. But lest my fashionable readers should be of a different opinion, I shall refrain from giving an inventory of the various articles with which this favoured chamber was furnished. Misses Grizzy and Jacky occupied the green room which had been fitted up at Sir Sampson's birth; the curtains hung at a respectful distance from the ground; the chimney-piece was far beyond the reach even of the majestic Jacky's arm; and the painted tiffany toilette was covered with a shoal of little tortoise-shell boxes of all shapes and sizes. A grim visage, scowling from under a Highland bonnet, graced by a single black feather, hung on high. Miss Grizzy placed herself before it, and, holding up the candle, contemplated it for about the nine hundredth time, with an awe bordering almost on adoration.

'Certainly Sir Eneas must have been a most wonderful man—nobody can deny that; and there can be no question but he had the second-sight to the greatest degree—indeed, I never heard it disputed; many of his prophecies, indeed, seem to have been quite incomprehensible; but that is so much the more extraordinary, you know—for instance, the one with

regard to our family,' lowering her voice—'for my part I declare I never could comprehend it; and yet there must be something in it, too; but how any branch from the Glenfern tree—of course, you know, that can only mean the family tree—should help to prop Lochmarlie's walls, is what I can't conceive. If Sir Sampson had a son, to be sure, some of the girls—for you know it can't be any of us; at least I declare for my own part—I'm sure even if any thing—which I trust, in goodness, there is not the least chance of, should ever happen to dear Lady Maclaughlan, and Sir Sampson should take it into his head—which, of course, is a thing not to be thought about—and indeed I'm quite convinced it would be very much out of respect to dear Lady Maclaughlan, as well as friendship for us, if such a thing was ever to come into his head.'

Here the tender Grizzy got so involved in her own ideas, as to the possibility of Lady Maclaughlan's death, and the propriety of Sir Sampson's proposals, together with the fulfilling of Sir Eneas the seer's prophecy, that there is no saying how far she strayed in her self-created labyrinth. Such as choose to follow her may. For our part, we prefer accompanying the youthful Becky to her chamber, whither she was also attended by the Lady of the mansion. Becky's destiny for the night lay at the top of one of those little straggling wooden stairs common in old houses, which creaked in all directions. The bed was placed in a recess dark as Erebus, and betwixt the bed and the wall was a depth profound, which Becky's eye dared not attempt to penetrate.

'You will find every thing right here,' said Lady Maclaughlan; 'and if any thing should be wrong, you must think it right. I never suffer any thing to be wrong here—humph!' Becky, emboldened by despair, cast a look towards the recess; and, in a faint voice, ventured to inquire, 'Is there no fear that Tom Jones, or Gil Blas, may be in that place behind the bed?'

'And if they should,' answered her hostess, in her most appalling tone, 'what is that to you? Are you a mouse, that you are afraid they will eat you? Yes, I suppose you are. You are perhaps the princess in the fairy tale, who was a woman by day, and a mouse by night. I believe you are bewitched! So I wish your mouseship a good night.' And she descended the creaking stair, singing,

'Mrs. Mouse, are you within,'

till even her stentorian voice was lost in distance. Poor Becky's heart died with the retreating sounds, and only revived to beat time with the worm in the wood. Long and eerie was the night, as she gave herself up to all the horrors of a superstitious mind—ghosts, gray, black, and white, flitted around her couch—cats, half human, held her throat—the death-watch ticked in her ears. At length, the light of morning shed its brightening influence on the dim opaque of her understanding; and when all things stood disclosed in light, she shut her eyes, and ope'd her mouth, in all the blissfulness of security. The light of day was indeed favourable for displaying to advantage the beauties of Lochmarlie Castle, which owed more to nature than art. It was beautifully situated on a smooth green bank, that rose somewhat abruptly from the lake, and commanded a view which, if not extensive, was yet full of variety and grandeur.

Its venerable turrets reared themselves above the trees, which seemed coeval with them; and the vast magnificence of its wide-spreading lawns and extensive forests, seemed to appertain to some feudal prince's lofty domain. But in vain were creation's charms spread before Lady Juliana's eyes. Woods, and mountains, and lakes, and rivers, were odious things; and her heart panted for dusty squares, and suffocating drawing-rooms.

Something was said of departing, by the sisters,

when the party met at breakfast; but this was immediately negatived, in the most decided manner, by their hostess.

'Since you have taken your own time to come, my dears, you must take mine to go. Thursday was the day I invited you for, or at least wanted you for, so you must stay Thursday, and go away on Friday, and my blessing go with you—humph!'

The sisters, charmed with what they termed the hospitality and friendship of this invitation, delightedly agreed to remain; and as things were at least conducted in better style there than at Glenfern, uncomfortable as it was, Lady Juliana found herself somewhat nearer home there than at the family chateau. Lady Maclaughlan, who *could* be uncommonly civil in her own house, was at some pains to amuse her guest, by showing her collection of china, and cabinet of gems, both of which were remarkably fine. There was also a library, and a gallery, containing some good pictures, and, what Lady Juliana prized still more, a billiard-table. Thursday, the destined day, at length arrived, and a large party assembled to dinner. Lady Juliana, as she half reclined on a sofa, surveyed the company with a supercilious stare, and without deigning to take any part in the general conversation that went on. It was enough that they spoke with a peculiar accent—every thing they said must be barbarous; but she was pleased once more to eat off plate, and to find herself in rooms which, though grotesque and comfortless, yet wore an air of state, and whose vastness enabled her to keep aloof from those with whom she never willingly came in contact. It was therefore with regret she saw the day of her departure arrive, and found herself once more an unwilling inmate of her only asylum, particularly as her situation now required comforts and indulgences which it was there impossible to procure.

CHAPTER [illegible]

[illegible] innocence [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] long and anxiously [illegible] [illegible] length arrived, and Lady [illegible] presented to the house [illegible] [illegible] desired her [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] daughter, who [illegible] as additional [illegible] of [illegible]

[illegible] disappointment was [illegible] [illegible] and down the parlour [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] wonder what [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] and [illegible] sure Lady [illegible]

[illegible] promised [illegible] forming the [illegible]

[illegible]

Henry, [illegible] had [illegible] [illegible] for the safety [illegible] for the suffer- [illegible] youthful partner, had [illegible] and, kneeling by her side, he pressed [illegible]

hands to his lips with feelings of the deepest emotion.

'Dearer—a thousand times dearer to me than ever,' whispered he, as he fondly embraced her, 'and those sweet pledges of our love!'

'Ah, don't mention them,' interrupted his lady in a languid tone: 'How very provoking!—I hate girls so—and two of them—oh!' and she sighed deeply. Her husband sighed too, but from a different cause. The nurse now appeared, and approached with her helpless charges; and both parents, for the first time, looked on their own offspring.

'What nice little creatures!' said the delighted father, as, taking them in his arms, he imprinted the first kiss on the innocent faces of his daughters, and then held them to their mother; who, turning from them with disgust, exclaimed, 'How can you kiss them, Harry! They are so ugly, and they squall so! Oh do, for heaven's sake, take them away! And see, there is poor Psyche, quite wretched at being so long away from me—Pray put her on the bed.'

'She will grow fond of her babies by and by,' said poor Henry to himself, as he quitted the apartment, with feelings very different from those with which he entered it.

At the pressing solicitations of her husband, the fashionable mother was prevailed upon to attempt nursing one of her poor starving infants; but the first trial proved also the last, as she declared nothing upon earth should ever induce her to perform so odious an office; and as Henry's entreaties, and her aunts' remonstrances, served alike to irritate and agitate her, the contest was, by the advice of her medical attendant, completely given up. A wet-nurse was therefore procured; but as she refused to undertake both children, and the old gentleman would not hear of having two such incumbrances in his family, it was settled, to the unspeakable delight of the maiden

sisters, that the youngest should be intrusted entirely to their management, and brought up by hand.

The consequence was such as might have been foreseen. The child, who was naturally weak and delicate at its birth, daily lost a portion of its little strength, while its continued cries declared the intensity of its sufferings, though they produced no other effect on its unfeeling mother, than her having it removed to a more distant apartment, as she could not endure to hear the cross little thing scream so for nothing. On the other hand, the more favoured twin, who was from its birth a remarkable strong lively infant, and met with all justice from its nurse, throve apace, and was pronounced by her to be the very picture of the *bonnie leddie, its mamma;* and then, with all the low cunning of her kind, she would launch forth into panegyrics of its beauty, and prophecies of the great dignities and honours that would one day be showered upon it; until, by her fawning and flattery, she succeeded in exciting a degree of interest, which nature had not secured for it in the mother's breast.

Things were in this situation, when, at the end of three weeks, Mr. and Mrs. Douglas arrived to offer their congratulations on the birth of the twins. Lady Juliana received her sister-in-law in her apartment, which she had not yet quitted, and replied to her congratulations only by querulous complaints and childish murmurs.

'I am sure you are very happy in not having children,' continued she, as the cries of the little sufferer reached her ear; 'I hope to goodness I shall never have any more.—I wonder if any body ever had twin daughters before! and I, too, who hate girls so!'

Mrs. Douglas, disgusted with her unfeeling folly, knew not what to reply, and a pause ensued; but a fresh burst of cries from the unfortunate baby, again called forth its mother's indignation.

'I wish to goodness that child was gagged,' cried she, holding her hands to her ears. 'It has done nothing but scream since the hour it was born, and it makes me quite sick to hear it.'

'Poor little dear!' said Mrs. Douglas, compassionately, 'it appears to suffer a great deal.'

'Suffer!' repeated her sister-in-law: 'What can it suffer? I am sure it meets with a great deal more attention than any person in the house. These three old women do nothing but feed it from morning to night, with every thing they can think of, and make such a fuss about it!'

'I suspect, my dear sister, you would be very sorry for yourself,' said Mrs. Douglas with a smile, 'were you to endure the same treatment as your poor baby, stuffed with improper food, and loathsome drugs, and bandied about from one person to another.'

'You may say what you please,' retorted Lady Juliana, pettishly; 'but I know its nothing but ill temper: nurse says so too; and it is so ugly with constantly crying, that I cannot bear to look at it;' and she turned away her head, as Miss Jacky entered with the little culprit in her arms, which she was vainly endeavouring to *talk* into silence, while she dandled it in the most awkward *maiden-like* manner imaginable.

'Good heavens! what a fright!' exclaimed the tender parent, as her child was held up to her. 'Why, it is much less than when it was born, and its skin is as yellow as saffron, and it squints! Only look what a difference,' as the nurse advanced and ostentatiously displayed her charge, who had just waked out of a long sleep; its cheeks flushed with heat; its skin completely filled up; and its large eyes rolling under its already dark eye-lashes.

'The bonny wean's just her mamma's pickter,' drawled out the nurse, 'but the wee missy's unco like her aunties.'

'Take her away,' cried Lady Juliana, in a tone of despair—'I wish I could send her out of my hearing altogether, for her noise will be the death of me.'

'Alas! what would I give to hear the blessed sound of a living child!' exclaimed Mrs. Douglas, taking the infant in her arms. 'And how great would be my happiness, could I call the poor rejected one mine!'

'I'm sure you are welcome to my share of the little plague,' said her sister-in-law, with a laugh, 'if you can prevail upon Harry to give up his.'

'I would give up a great deal, could my poor child find a mother,' replied her husband, who just then entered.

'My dear brother!' cried Mrs. Douglas, her eyes beaming with delight, 'do you then confirm Lady Juliana's kind promise? Indeed I will be a mother to your dear baby, and love her as if she were my own; and in a month—Oh! in much less time—you shall see her as stout as her sister.'

Henry sighed, as he thought, why has not my poor babe such a mother of its own! Then thanking his sister-in-law for her generous intentions, he reminded her that she must consult her husband, as few men liked to be troubled with any children but their own.

'You are in the right,' said Mrs. Douglas, blushing at the impetuosity of feeling, which had made her forget for an instant the deference due to her husband; 'I shall instantly ask his permission, and he is so indulgent to all my wishes, that I have little doubt of obtaining his consent;' and, with the child in her arms, she hastened to her husband, and made known her request.

Mr. Douglas received the proposal with considerable coolness; wondering what his wife could see in such an ugly squalling thing, to plague herself about it. If it had been a boy, old enough to speak and

run about, there might be some amusement in it; but he could not see the use of a squalling sickly infant—and a girl too!

His wife sighed deeply, and the tears stole down her cheeks, as she looked on the wan visage and closed eyes of the little sufferer. 'God help thee, poor baby!' said she mournfully; 'you are rejected on all hands, but your misery will soon be at an end?' and she was slowly leaving the room with her helpless charge, when her husband, touched at the sight of her distress, though the feeling that caused it he did not comprehend, called to her, 'I am sure, Alicia, if you really wish to take charge of the infant, I have no objections; only I think you will find it a great plague, and the mother is such a fool.'

'Worse than a fool,' said Mrs. Douglas indignantly, 'for she hates and abjures this her poor unoffending babe.'

'Does she so?' cried Mr. Douglas, every kindling feeling roused within him at the idea of his blood being hated and abjured; 'then, hang me! if she shall have any child of Harry's to hate, as long as I have a house to shelter it, and a sixpence to bestow upon it,' taking the infant in his arms, and kindly kissing it.

Mrs. Douglas smiled through her tears, as she embraced her husband, and praised his goodness and generosity; then, full of exultation and delight, she flew to impart the success of her mission to the parents of her *protégé*.

Great was the surprise of the maiden-nurses, at finding they were to be bereft of their little charge.

'I declare, I think the child is doing as well as possible,' said Miss Grizzy. 'To be sure, it does yammer constantly—that can't be denied; and it is uncommonly small—nobody can dispute that. At the same time, I am sure, I can't tell what makes it cry, for I've given it two cholic powders every

day, and a tea-spoonful of Lady Maclaughlan's carminative every three hours.'

'And I've done nothing but make water-gruel, and chop rusks for it,' quoth Miss Nicky, 'and yet it is never satisfied. I wonder what it would be at.'

'I know perfectly well what it would be at,' said Miss Jacky, with an air of importance. 'All this crying and screaming, is for nothing else but a nurse; but it ought not to be indulged: there is no end of indulging the desires, and 'tis amazing how cunning children are, and how soon they know how to take advantage of people's weakness,' glancing an eye of fire at Mrs. Douglas. 'Were that my child, I would feed her on bread and water, before I would humour her fancies. A pretty lesson indeed! If she's to have her own way before she's a month old.'

Mrs. Douglas knew that it was in vain to attempt arguing with her aunts. She therefore allowed them to wonder, and declaim over their sucking pots, cholic powders, and other instruments of torture, while she sent to the wife of one of her tenants who had lately lain in, and who wished for the situation of nurse, appointing her to be at Lochmarlie the following day. Having made her arrangements, and collected the scanty portion of clothing Mrs. Nurse chose to allow, Mrs. Douglas repaired to her sister-in-law's apartment, with her little charge in her arms. She found her still in bed, and surrounded with her favourites.

'So you really are going to torment yourself with that little screech-owl,' said she. 'Well, I must say it's very good of you; but I am afraid you will soon tire of her. Children are such plagues! Are they not, my darling?' added she, kissing her pug.

'You will not say so, when you have seen my little girl a month hence,' said Mrs. Douglas, trying to conceal her disgust for Henry's sake, who had just then entered the room. 'She has promised me

never to cry any more; so give her a kiss, and let us begone.'

The high-bred mother slightly touched the cheek of her sleeping babe, extended her finger to her sister-in-law, and carelessly bidding them good-by, returned to her pillow and her pugs.

Henry accompanied Mrs. Douglas to the carriage, and before they parted, he promised his brother to ride over to Lochmarlie in a few days. He said nothing of his child, but his glistening eye, and the warm pressure of his hand, spoke volumes to the kind heart of his brother; who assured him that Alice would be very good to his little girl, and that he was sure she would get quite well when she got a nurse. The carriage drove off, and Henry with a heavy spirit, returned to the house to listen to his father's lectures, his aunts' ejaculations, and his wife's murmurs.

CHAPTER XIX.

"We may boldly spend upon the hope of what
Is to come in."

Henry IV.

The birth of twin daughters awakened the young father to a still stronger sense of the total dependence and extreme helplessness of his condition. Yet how to remedy it he knew not: to accept of his father's proposal was out of the question, and it was equally impossible for him, were he ever so inclined, to remain much longer a burden on the narrow income of the Laird of Glenfern. One alternative only remained, which was to address the friend and patron of his youth, General Cameron; and to him he therefore wrote, describing all the misery of his situation, and imploring his forgiveness and assistance. 'The old General's passion must have cooled by this time,' thought he to himself, as he sealed the letter, 'and, as he has often over-looked former scrapes, I think, after all, he will help me out of this greatest one of all.'

For once Henry was not mistaken. He received an answer to his letter, in which the General, after execrating his folly in marrying a lady of quality; swearing at the birth of his twin daughters; and giving him some wholesome counsel as to his future mode of life, concluded by informing that he had got him reinstated in his former rank in the army; that he should settle seven hundred per annum on him, till he saw how matters were conducted, and, in the mean time, enclosed a draught for four hundred pounds, to open the campaign.

Though this was not, according to Henry's notions, 'coming down handsomely,' still it was better than not coming down at all, and with a mixture of delight and disappointment, he flew to communicate the tidings to Lady Juliana.

'Seven hundred pounds a year!' exclaimed she, in raptures: 'Heavens! what a quantity of money! why, we shall be quite rich, and I shall have such a beautiful house, and such pretty carriages, and give such parties, and buy so many fine things—O dear, how happy I shall be!'

'You know little of money, Julia, if you think seven hundred pounds will do all that,' replied her husband gravely. 'I hardly think we can afford a house in town; but we may have a pretty cottage at Richmond or Twickenham, and I can keep a curricle, and drive you about, you know; and we may give famous good dinners.'

A dispute here ensued; her Ladyship hated cottages and curricles, and good dinners, as much as her husband despised fancy balls, opera boxes, and chariots.

The fact was, that the one knew very nearly as much of the real value of money as the other, and Henry's *sober* scheme was just about as practicable as his wife's extravagant one.

Brought up in the luxurious profusion of a great house; accustomed to issue her orders, and have them obeyed, Lady Juliana, at the time she married, was in the most blissful state of ignorance respecting the value of pounds, shillings, and pence. Her maid took care to have her wardrobe supplied with all things needful; and when she wanted a new dress or a fashionable jewel, it was only driving to Madame D's. and Mr. Y's. and desiring the article to be sent to herself, while the bill went to her papa.

From never seeing money in its own vulgar form,

Lady Juliana had learned to consider it as a mere nominal thing; while, on the other hand, her husband, from seeing too much of it, had formed almost equally erroneous ideas of its powers. By the mistaken kindness of General Cameron, he had been indulged in all the fashionable follies of the day, and allowed to use his patron's ample fortune as if it had already been his own; nor was it until he found himself a prisoner at Glenfern from want of money, that he had ever attached the smallest importance to it. In short, both the husband and wife had been accustomed to look upon it in the same light as the air they breathed. They knew it essential to life, and concluded that it would come some way or other; either from the east or west, north or south.

As for the vulgar concerns of meat and drink, servants' wages, taxes, and so forth, they never found a place in the calculations of either. Birthday dresses, fetes, operas, equipages, and state liveries, whirled in rapid succession through Lady Juliana's brain, while clubs, curricles, horses, and claret, took possession of her husband's mind.

However much they differed in the proposed modes of showing off in London, both agreed perfectly in the necessity of going there, and Henry therefore hastened to inform his father of the change in his circumstances, and apprize him of his intention of immediately joining his regiment, the —— Guards.

'Seven hunder pound a year!' exclaimed the old gentleman; 'Seven hunder pound! Oo what can ye mak o' a' that siller? Ye'll surely lay by the half o't to tocher your bairns—Seven hunder pound a year for doing naething!'

Miss Jacky was afraid, unless they got some person of sense, (which would not be an easy matter,) to take the management of it, it would perhaps be found little enough in the long run.

Miss Grizzy declared it was a very handsome income, nobody could dispute that; at the same time, every body must allow, that the money could not have been better bestowed.

'Miss Nicky observed, 'there was a great deal of good eating and drinking in seven hundred a year, if people knew how to manage it.'

All was bustle and preparation throughout Glenfern Castle, and the young ladies' good natured activity and muscular powers were again in requisition to collect the wardrobe, and pack the trunks, imperial, &c. of their noble sister.

Glenfern remarked, 'that fules war fond o' flitting, for they seemed glad to leave the good quarters they were in.'

Miss Grizzy declared, there was a great excuse for being glad, poor things! young people were always so fond of a change; at the same time, nobody could deny but that it would have been quite natural for them to feel sorry too.

Miss Jacky was astonished how any person's mind could be so callous as to think of leaving Glenfern without emotion.

Miss Nicky wondered what was to become of the christening cake she had ordered from Perth; it might be as old as the hills before there would be another child born amongst them.

The Misses were ready to weep at the disappointment of the dreaming bread.

In the midst of all this agitation, mental and bodily, the long-looked for moment arrived. The carriage drove round ready packed and loaded, and absolutely screaming with delight, Lady Juliana sprung into it; as she nodded and kissed her hand to the assembling groupe, she impatiently called to Henry to follow. His adieus were, however, not quite so tonish as those of his high-bred lady, for he went duly and severally through all the evo-

lutions of kissing, embracing, shaking of hands, and promises to write; then taking his station by the side of the nurse and child, the rest of the carriage being completely filled by the favourites, he bade a long farewell to his paternal halls and the land of his birth.

CHAPTER XX.

——— 'For trifles, why should I displease
The man I love? For trifles such as these
To serious mischiefs lead the man I love.

HORACE.

BRIGHT prospects of future happiness, and endless plans of expense, floated through Lady Juliana's brain, and kept her temper in some degree of serenity during the journey.

Arrived in London, she expressed herself enraptured at being once more in a civilized country, and restored to the society of human creatures. An elegant house, and suitable establishment, were immediately provided; and a thousand dear friends, who had completely forgotten her existence, were now eager to welcome her to her former haunts, and lead her thoughtless and willing steps in the paths of dissipation and extravagance.

Soon after their arrival, they were visited by General Cameron. It was two o'clock, yet Lady Juliana had not appeared; and Henry, half-stretched upon a sopha, was dawdling over half-a-dozen newspapers scattered round.

The first salutations over, the General demanded —'Am I not to be favoured with a sight of your lady? Is she afraid that I am one of your country relations, and taken her flight from the breakfast table in consequence?'

'She has not yet made her appearance,' replied Douglas; 'but I will let her know you are here. I am sure she will be happy to make acquaintance with one to whom I am so much indebted."

A message was dispatched to Lady Juliana, who returned for answer, that she would be down immediately. Three quarters of an hour, however, elapsed; and the General, provoked with this inattention and affectation, was preparing to depart, when the Lady made her appearance.

'Juliana, my love,' said her husband, 'let me present you to General Cameron—the generous friend who has acted the part of a father towards me, and to whom you owe all the comforts you enjoy.'

Lady Juliana slightly bowed with careless ease, and half uttered a 'How d'ye do—very happy indeed—' as she glided on to pull the bell for breakfast. 'Cupid, Cupid!' cried she to the dog, who had flown upon the General, and was barking most vehemently; 'poor darling Cupid! are you almost starved to death? Harry, do give him that muffin on your plate.'

'You are very late to-day, my love,' cried the mortified husband.

'I have been pestered for the last hour with Duval and the court dresses, and I could not fix on what I should like.'

'I think you might have deferred the ceremony of choosing to another opportunity. General Cameron has been here above an hour.'

'Dear! I hope you did not wait for me—I shall be quite shocked!' drawled out her Ladyship in a tone denoting how very indifferent the answer would be to her.

'I beg your Ladyship would be under no uneasiness on that account,' replied the General, in an ironical tone, which, though lost upon her, was obvious enough to Henry.

'Have you breakfasted?' asked Lady Juliana, exerting herself to be polite.

'Absurd, my love!' cried her husband. 'Do you suppose I should have allowed the General to wait for that too all this time, if he had not breakfasted many hours ago.'

'How cross you are this morning, my Harry! I protest my Cupidon is quite ashamed of your *grossiéreté!*'

A servant now entered to say Mr. Shagg was come to know her Ladyship's final decision about the hammer-cloths; and the new footman was come to be engaged; and the china merchant was below.

'Send up one of them at a time; and, as to the footman, you may say, I'll have him at once,' said Lady Juliana.

'I thought you had engaged Mrs. D.'s footman last week. She gave him the best character, did she not?' asked her husband.

'O yes! his character was good enough; but he was a horrid cheat for all that. He called himself five feet nine, and when he was measured, he turned out to be only five feet seven and a half.'

'Pshaw!' exclaimed Henry angrily, 'What the devil did that signify, if the man had a good character?'

'How absurdly you talk, Harry, as if a man's character signified, who has nothing to do but to stand behind my carriage!—A pretty figure he'd make there beside Thomas, who is at least five feet ten!'

The entrance of Mr. Shagg, bowing and scraping, and laden with cloths, lace, and fringes, interrupted the conversation.

'Well, Mr. Shagg,' cried Lady Juliana, 'what's to be done with that odious leopard's skin; you must positively take it off my hands. I would rather never go in a carriage again as show myself in the Park with that frightful thing.'

'Certainly, my Lady,' replied the obsequious Mr. Shagg, 'any thing your Ladyship pleases; your Ladyship can have any hammer-cloth you like; and I have accordingly brought patterns of the very newest fashions for your Ladyship to make choice. Here are some uncommon elegant articles. At the

same time, my Lady, your Ladyship must be sensible, that it is impossible that we can take back the leopard's skin. It was not only cut out to fit your Ladyship's coach-box—and consequently your Ladyship understands it would not fit any other—but the silver feet and crests have also been affixed quite ready for use, so that the article is quite lost to us. I am confident, therefore, that your Ladyship will consider of this, and allow it to be put down in your bill.'

'Put it any where but on my coach-box, and don't bore me!' answered Lady Juliana, tossing over the patterns, and humming a tune.

'What,' said her husband, 'is that the leopard's skin you were raving about last week, and are you tired of it before it has been used?'

'And no wonder. Who do you think I saw in the Park yesterday, but that old quiz Lady Denham, just come from the country, with her frightful old coach set off with a hammer-cloth precisely like the one I had ordered. Only fancy people saying, Lady Denham sets the fashion for Lady Juliana Douglas! O, there's confusion and despair in the thought!'

Confusion, at least, if not despair, was painted in Henry's face, as he saw the General's glance directed alternately with contempt at Lady Juliana, and at himself, mingled with pity. He continued to fidget about in all directions, while Lady Juliana talked nonsense to Mr. Shagg, and wondered if the General never meant to go away. But he calmly kept his ground till the man was dismissed, and another introduced, loaded with china jars, monsters, and distorted tea-pots, for the capricious fair one's choice and approbation.

'Beg ten thousand pardons, my Lady, for not calling yesterday, according to appointment—quite an unforeseen impediment. The Countess of Godolphin had somehow got private intelligence that I had a set of fresh commodities just cleared from the

custom-house, and well knowing such things are not long in hand, her La'ship came up from the country on purpose—the Countess has so much taste!—she drove straight to my warehouse, and kept me a close prisoner till after your La'ship's hour; but I hope it may not be taken amiss, seeing that it is not a customary thing with us to be calling on customers, not to mention, that this line of goods is not easily transported about. However, I flatter myself, the articles now brought for your Ladyship's inspection will not be found beneath your notice. Please to observe this choice piece—it represents a Chinese cripple, squat on the ground, with his legs crossed. Your Ladyship may observe the head and chin advanced forwards, as in the act of begging. The tea pours from the open mouth; and, till your Ladyship tries, you can have no idea of the elegant effect it produces.'

'That is really droll,' cried Lady Juliana, with a laugh of delight; 'and I must have the dear sick beggar, he is so deliciously hideous.'

'And here,' continued Mr. Brittle, 'is an amazing delicate article, in the way of a jewel: a frog of Turkish agate for burning pastiles in, my Lady; just such as they use in the seraglio; and indeed this one I may call invaluable, for it was the favourite toy of one of the widowed Sultanas, till she grew devout and gave up perfumes. One of her slaves disposed of it to my foreign partner. Here it opens at the tail, where you put in the pastiles, and closing it up, the vapour issues beautifully through the nostrils, eyes, ears, and mouth, all at once. Here, Sir,' turning to Douglas, 'if you are curious in new workmanship, I would have you examine this. I defy any jeweller in London to come up to the fineness of these hinges, and delicacy of the carving—'

'Pshaw, damn it!' said Douglas, turning away, and addressing some remark to the General, who was provokingly attentive to every thing that went on.

'Here,' continued Mr. Brittle, 'are a set of jars, tea-pots, mandarins, sea-monsters, and pug-dogs, all of superior beauty, but such as your Ladyship may have seen before.'

'Oh, the dear, dear little puggies! I must have them to amuse my own darlings. I protest here is one the image of Psyche; positively I must kiss it!'

'O dear! I am sure,' cried Mr. Brittle, simpering, and making a conceited bow, 'your Ladyship does it and me too much honour. But here, as I was going to say, is the phœnix of all porcelain ware—the *ne plus ultra* of perfection—what I have kept in my back room, concealed from all eyes, until your Ladyship shall pronounce upon it. Somehow one of my shopmen got word of it, and told her Grace of L—— (who has a pretty taste in these things for a young lady,) that I had some particular choice article, that I was keeping for a lady that was a favourite of mine. Her Grace was in the shop the matter of a full hour and a half, trying to wheedle me out of a sight of this rare piece; and I, pretending not to know what her Grace would be after, but showing her thing after thing, to put it out of her head. But she was not so easily bubbled, and at last went away ill enough pleased. Now, my Lady, prepare all your eyes:' He then went to the door, and returned, carrying with difficulty a large basket, which till then had been kept by one of his satellites. After removing coverings of all descriptions, an uncouth groupe of monstrous size was displayed; which, on investigation, appeared to be a serpent coiled in regular folds round the body of a tiger placed on end; and the whole structure, which was intended for a vessel of some kind, was formed of the celebrated green mottled china, invaluable to connoisseurs.

'View that well,' exclaimed Mr. Brittle, in a transport of enthusiasm, 'for such a specimen not one of half the size has ever been imported to Europe.

There is a long story about this my phœnix, as I call it; but, to be brief, it was secretly procured from one of the temples, where, gigantic as it may seem, and uncouth for the purpose; it was the idol's principal tea pot!'

'O delicious!' cried Lady Juliana, clasping her hands in ecstasy; 'I will give a party, for the sole purpose of drinking tea out of this machine; and I will have the whole room fitted up like an Indian temple. Oh! it will be so new! I die to send out my cards. The Dutchess of B. told me the other day, with such a triumphant air, when I was looking at her two little green jars, not a quarter of the size of this, that there was not a bit more of that china to be had for love or money. Oh, she will be so provoked!' And she absolutely skipped for joy.

A loud rap at the door now announcing a visitor, Lady Juliana ran to the balcony, crying, 'Oh, it must be Lady Gerard, for she promised to call early in the morning, that we might go together to a wonderful sale in some far off place in the city—at Wapping, for aught I know. Mr. Brittle, Mr. Brittle, for the love of heaven, carry the dragon into the back drawing-room—I purchase it, remember!—make haste!—Lady Gerard is not to get a glimpse of it for the world.'

The servant now entered with a message from Lady Gerard, who would not alight, begging that Lady Juliana would make haste down to her, as they had not a moment to lose. She was flying away, without further ceremony than a 'Pray, excuse me,' to the General, when her husband called after her to know whether the child was gone out, as he wished to show her to the General.

'I don't know, indeed,' replied the fashionable mother; 'I haven't had time to see her to-day;' and, before Douglas could reply, she was down stairs.

A pause ensued—the General whistled a quick step, and Douglas walked up and down the room, in

a pitiable state of mind, guessing pretty much what was passing in the mind of his friend, and fully sensible that it must be of a severer nature than any thing he could yet allow himself to think of his Juliana.

'Douglas,' said the General, 'have you made any step towards a reconciliation with your father-in-law? I believe it will become shortly necessary for your support.'

'Juliana wrote twice after her marriage,' replied he; 'but the reception which her letters met with was not such as to encourage perseverance on our part. With regard to myself, it is not an affair in which delicacy will permit me to be very active, as I might be accused of mercenary motives, which I am far from having.'

'Oh, of that I acquit you; but surely it ought to be a matter of moment, even to a——Lady Juliana. The case is now altered. Time must have accustomed him to the idea of this imaginary affront; and, on my honour, if he thought like a gentleman, and a man of sense, I know where he would think the misfortune lay. Nay, don't interrupt me. The old Earl must now, I say, have cooled in his resentment; perhaps, too, his grand-children may soften his heart; this must have occurred to you. Has her Ladyship taken any further steps, since her arrival in town?'

'I—I believe she has not; but I will put her in mind.'

'A daughter who requires to have her memory refreshed on such a subject, is likely to make a valuable wife!' said the General drily.

Douglas felt as if it was incumbent on him to be angry, but remained silent.

'Hark ye, Douglas,' continued the General, 'I speak this for your interest. You cannot go on without the Earl's help. You know I am not on ceremony with you; and, if I refrain from saying what you see I think, about your present ruinous

mode of life, it is not to spare your feelings, but from a sense of the uselessness of any such remonstrance. What I do give you is with good will; but all my fortune would not suffice to furnish pug-dogs, and deformed tea-pots, for such a vitiated taste; and if it would, hang me if it should. But enough on this head. The Earl has been in bad health, and is lately come to town. His son, too, and his lady, are to come about the same time, and are to reside with him during the season. I have heard Lord Lindore spoken of as a good-natured easy man, and he would probably enter willingly into any scheme to reinstate his sister into his father's good graces. Think of this, and make what you can of it; and my particular advice to you personally is, try to exchange into a marching regiment; for a fellow like you, with such a wife, London is the very devil! and so good morning to you.' He snatched up his hat, and was off in a moment.

CHAPTER XXI.

"To reckon up a thousand of her pranks,
Her pride, her wasteful spending, her unkindness,
Her scolding, pouting, ————
Were to reap an endless catalogue.'

Old Play.

When Lady Juliana returned from her expedition, it was so late, that Douglas had not time to speak to her; and separate engagements carrying them different ways, he had no opportunity to do so until the following morning at breakfast. He then resolved no longer to defer what he had to say, and began by reproaching her with the cavalier manner in which she had behaved to his good friend, the General.

'Upon my life, Harry, you are grown perfectly savage,' cried his Lady. 'I was most particularly civil; I wonder what you would have me to do? You know very well, I cannot have any thing to say to old men of that sort.'

'I think,' returned Henry, 'you might have been gratified by making an acquaintance with my benefactor, and the man to whom you owe the enjoyment of your favourite pleasures. At any rate, you need not have made yourself ridiculous. May I perish, if I did not wish myself under ground, while you were talking nonsense to those sneaking rascals, who wheedle you out of your money! S'death! I had a good mind to throw them and their trumpery out of the window, when I saw you make such a fool of yourself.'

'A fool of myself! how foolishly you talk! and as for that vulgar awkward General, he ought to have been too much flattered. Some of the monsters were so like himself, I am sure he must have thought I took them for the love of his round bare pate.'

'Upon my soul, Julia! I am ashamed of you! Do leave off this excessive folly, and try to be rational. What I particularly wished to say to you, is, that your father is in town, and it will be proper that you should make another effort to be reconciled to him.'

'I dare say it will,' answered Lady Juliana, with a yawn.

'And you must lose no time. When will you write?'

'There's no use in writing, or indeed doing any thing in the matter. I am sure he won't forgive me.'

'And why not?'

'Oh, why should he do it now? He did not forgive me when I asked him before.'

'And do you think then for a father's forgiveness, it is not worth while to have a little perseverance?'

'I'm sure he won't do it; so 'tis in vain to try;' repeated she, going to the glass, and singing, '*Papa non dice ni no*,' &c.

'By heavens, Julia!' cried her husband passionately, 'you are past all endurance! Can nothing touch you?—nothing fix your thoughts, and make you serious for a single moment? Can I not make you understand, that you are ruining yourself and me; that we have nothing to depend upon but the bounty of that man whom you disgust by your caprice, extravagance, and impertinence; and that if you don't get reconciled to your father, what is to become of you? You already know what you have to expect from my family, and how you like living with them,'

'Heavens, Harry!' exclaimed her Ladyship, 'what is all this tirade about? Is it because I said papa would'nt forgive me? I am sure I don't mind writing to him; I have no objection the first leisure moment I have; but really, in town, one's time is so engrossed.'

At this moment her maid entered in triumph, car-

rying on her arms a satin dress, embroidered with gold and flowers.

'See, my Lady,' cried she, 'your new robe, as Madame has sent home half a day sooner than her word; and she has disobliged several of the quality, by not giving the pattern.'

'Oh, lovely! charming! Spread it out, Gage; hold it to the light; all my own fancy. Only look, Harry; how exquisite! how divine!'

Harry had no time to express his contempt for embroidered robes; for just then one of his knowing friends came, by appointment, to accompany him to Tattersal's, where he was to bid for a famous pair of curricle grays.

Days passed on without Lady Juliana's ever thinking it worth while to follow her husband's advice, about applying to her father; until a week after, Douglas overheard the following conversation between his wife and one of her acquaintance.

'You are going to this grand fete of course,' said Mrs. G. 'I'm told it is to eclipse every thing that has been yet seen or heard of.'

'Of what fete do you speak?' demanded Lady Juliana?'

'Lord, my dear creature, how gothic you are! Don't you know any thing about this grand affair, that every body has been talking of for two days?

Lady Lindore gives, at your father's house, an entertainment, which is to be a concert, ball, and masquerade at once. All London is asked, of any distinction, *c'a s'entend.* But, bless me, I beg pardon, I totally forgot that you were not on the best terms possible in that quarter—but, never mind, we must have you go; there is not a person of fashion that will stay away; I must get you asked; I shall petition Lady Lindore in your favour.'

'O pray don't trouble yourself;' cried Lady Juliana, in extreme pique. 'I believe I can get this done without your obliging interference; but I don't know *whether* I shall be in town then.'

From this moment, lady Juliana resolved to make a vigorous effort to regain a footing in her father's house. Her first action, the next morning, was to write to her brother, who had hitherto kept aloof, because he could not be at the trouble of having a difference with the Earl, entreating him to use his influence in promoting a reconciliation between her father and herself.

No answer was returned for four days, at the end of which time lady Juliana received the following note from her brother.

"DEAR JULIA,

"I quite agree with you in thinking, that you have been kept long enough in the corner, and shall certainly tell Papa that you are ready to become a good girl, whenever he shall please to take you out of it. I shall endeavour to see Douglas and you soon. "Yours affectionately,

"LINDORE."

"Lady Lindore desires me to say you can have tickets for her ball, if you choose to come *en masque*."

Lady Juliana was delighted with this billet, which she protested was every thing that was kind and generous; but the postscript was the part on which she dwelt with the greatest delight, as she repeatedly declared it was a great deal more than she expected. "You see, Harry," said she, as she tossed the note to him, "I was in the right. Papa won't forgive me; but Lindore says he will send me a ticket for the fête; it is vastly attentive of him, for I did not ask it. But I must go disguised, which is monstrous provoking, for I'm afraid nobody will know me."

A dispute here ensued. Henry swore she should not steal into her father's house as long as she was his wife. The lady insisted that she should go to her brother's fête when she was invited; and

the altercation ended as altercations commonly do, leaving both parties more wedded to their own opinion than at first.

In the evening, lady Juliana went to a large party; and, as she was passing from one room into another, she was startled by a little paper pellet thrown at her. Turning round to look for the offender, she saw her brother standing at a little distance, smiling at her surprise. This was the first time she had seen him for two years, and she went up to him with an extended hand, while he gave her a familiar nod, and a "How d'ye do, Julia," and one finger of his hand, while he turned round to speak to one of his companions. Nothing could be more characteristic of both parties than this fraternal meeting; and, from this time, they were the best friends imaginable.

CHAPTER XXI.

"Helas! où donc chercher ou trouver le bonheur
Nulle part tout entier, partout avec mesure!"

VOLTAIRE.

SOME days before the expected fête, lady Juliana, at the instigation of her adviser, lady Gerard, resolved upon taking the field against the Duchess of L——. Her Grace had issued cards for a concert; and, after mature deliberation, it was decided, that her rival should strike out something new, and announce a christening for the same night.

The first intimation Douglas had of the honour intended him by this arrangement, was through the medium of the newspaper, for the husband and wife were now much too fashionable to be at all *au fait* of each other's schemes. His first emotion was to be extremely surprised; the next to be exceedingly displeased; and the last to be highly gratified at the *eclat* with which his child was to be made a christian. True, he had intended requesting the General to act as godfather upon the occasion; but lady Juliana protested she would rather the child never should be christened at all, (which already seemed nearly to have been the case) than have that cross, vulgar-looking man to stand sponsor. Her ladyship however, so far conceded, that the General was to have the honour of giving his name to the next, if a boy, for she was now near her second confinement; and, with this promise, Henry was satisfied to slight the only being in the world, to whom he looked for support to himself and his children. In the utmost delight, the fond mother drove away to consult her confidants upon the name and decorations of the child, whom she had not even looked at for many days.

Every thing succeeded to admiration. Amid crowds of spectators, in all the pomp of lace and satin, surrounded by princes and peers, and liard

ed from duchesses to countesses, the twin daughter of Henry Douglas, and the heroine of future story, became a christian by the names of Adelaide Julia.

Some months previous to this event, lady Juliana had received a letter from Mrs. Douglas, informing her of the rapid improvement that had taken place in her little charge, and requesting to know by what name she should have her christened; at the same time, gently insinuating her wish, that, in compliance with the custom of the country, and as a compliment due to the family, it should be named after its paternal grandmother.

Lady Juliana glanced over the first line of the letter, then looked at the signature, resolved to read the rest as soon as she should have time to answer it; and, in the meantime, tossed it into a drawer, amongst old visiting cards, and unpaid bills.

After vainly waiting for an answer, much beyond the accustomed time when children are baptized, Mrs. Douglas could no longer refuse to accede to the desires of the venerable inmates of Glenfern; and about a month before her favoured sister received her more elegant appellations—the neglected twin was baptized by the name of Mary.

Mrs. Douglas' letter had been enclosed in the following one from Miss Grizzy, and as it had not the good fortune to be perused by the person to whom it was addressed, we deem it but justice to the writer to insert it here.

Glenfern Castle,
July 30th, 17—.

"MY DEAREST NIECE, LADY JULIANA,

"I am Certain, as indeed we all are, that it will Afford your Ladyship and our dear Nephew *the greatest* Pleasure to see this letter Franked by *our Worthy* and Respectable Friend Sir Sampson *Maclaughlan*, Bart. especially as it is the First he

has ever franked; out of compliment to you, as I assure you he admires you excessively, as indeed we all do. At the same Time, you will of course, I am sure, Sympathise with us in all the distress Occasioned by the melancholy Death of our late most obliging Member, Duncan M'Dunsmuir, Esquire, of Dhunacrag and Auchnagoil, who you never have had the Pleasure of seeing. What renders his Death particularly distressing is, that lady Maclaughlan is of opinion it was entirely owing to eating Raw oysters, and damp feet. This ought to be a warning to all Young people to take care of Wet feet, and Especially eating Raw oysters, which are certainly Highly dangerous, particularly where there is any Tendency to Gout. I hope, my dear Niece, you have got a pair of Stout walking shoes, and that both Henry and you remember to Change your feet after Walking. I am told Raw oysters are much the fashion in London at present; but when this Fatal Event comes to be Known, it will of course Alarm people very much and put them upon their guard both as to Damp Feet and Raw Oysters. Lady Maclaughlan is in High spirits at Sir Sampson's Success, though at the Same Time, I assure you, she Felt much for the Distress of poor Mr. M'Dunsmuir, and had sent him a Large Box of Pills, and a Bottle of Gout Tincture, only two days before he died. This will be a great Thing for you, and especially for Henry, my dear Niece, as Sir Sampson and Lady Maclaughlan are going to London directly to take his Seat in Parliament; and she will make a point of Paying you every attention, and will Matronize you to the play, and any other Public places you may wish to go; as both my Sisters and I are of opinion you are rather Young to matronize yourself yet, and you could not get a more Respectable Matron than lady Maclaughlan. I hope Harry wont take it amiss, if Sir Sampson does not pay him so much Attention as he might expect; but he says that he

will not be master of a moment of his own Time in London. He will be so much taken up with the King and the Duke of York, that he is afraid he will Disoblige a great Number of the Nobility by it, besides injuring his own health by such Constant application to business. He is to make a very fine Speech in Parliament, but it is not yet Fixed what his First Motion is to be upon. He himself wishes to move for a New Subsidy to the Emperor of Germany; but lady Maclaughlan is of opinion, that it would be better to Bring in a Bill for Building a bridge over the Water of Dlin; which, to be sure, is very much wanted, as a Horse and Cart were drowned at the Ford last Speat. We are All, I am happy to Say, in excellent Health. Becky is recovering from the Measles as well as could be Wished, and the Rose* is quite gone out of Bella's Face. Beennie has been prevented from Finishing a most Beautiful Pair of bottle Sliders for your Ladyship by a whitlow, but it is now Mending, and I hope will be done in Time to go with Babby's Vase Carpet, which is extremely elegant, by Sir S. and Lady Maclaughlan. This Place is in great Beauty at present, and the new Byre is completely finished. My Sisters and I regret Excessively that Henry and you should have seen Glenfern to such disadvantage; but when next you favour us with a visit, I hope it will be in Summer, and the New Byre you will think a Prodigious Improvement. Our dear Little Grand-niece is in great health, and much improved. We reckon her Extremely like our Family, Particularly Becky; though she has a great Look of Bella, at the Same Time, when she Laughs. Excuse the Shortness of this Letter, my dear Niece, as I shall Write a much Longer one by Lady Maclaughlan.

"Meantime, I remain, my
"Dear lady Juliana, yours and
"Henry's most affect. aunt,
"GRIZZEL DOUGLAS."

* Erysipelas.

In spite of her husband's remonstrance, lady Juliana persisted in her resolution of attending her sister-in-law's masked ball, from which she returned, worn out with amusement, and surfeited with pleasure; protesting all the while she dawdled over her evening breakfast the following day, that there was nobody in the world so much to be envied as lady Lindore. Such jewels! such dresses! such a house! such a husband! so easy and good-natured, and rich and generous! She was sure Lindore did not care what his wife did. She might give what parties she pleased; go where she liked; spend as much money as she chose; and he would never trouble his head about the matter. She was quite certain lady Lindore had not a single thing to wish for: *ergo*, she must be the happiest woman in the world! All this was addressed to Henry, who had, however, attained the happy art of not hearing above one word out of a hundred that happened to fall from the "angel lips of his adored Julia;" and, having finished the newspapers, and made himself acquainted with all the blood-horses, thorough-bred *fillies*, and brood mares therein set forth, with a yawn and whistle sauntered away to G.'s, to look at the last regulation epaulettes.

Not long after, as lady Juliana was stepping into the carriage, that was to whirl her to Bond-Street, she was met by her husband; who, with a solemnity of manner that would have startled any one but his volatile lady, requested she would return with him into the house, as he wished to converse with her upon a subject of some importance. He prevailed on her to return, upon condition that he would not detain her above five minutes. When shutting the drawing-room doors, he said, with earnestness, "I think, Julia, you were talking of lady Lindore this morning: oblige me by repeating what you said, as I was reading the papers, and really did not attend much to what passed."

Her ladyship, in extreme surprise, wondered

how Harry could be so tiresome and absurd as to stop her airing for any such purpose. She really did not know what she said. How could she? It was more than an hour ago.

"Well, then, say what you think of her now, cried Douglas impatiently.

"Think of her! why, what all the world must think—that she is the happiest woman in it. She looked so uncommonly well last night, and was in such spirits, in her fancy dress, before she masked. After that I quite lost sight of her."

"As every one else has done: She has not been seen since. Her favourite St. Leger is missing too, and there is hardly a doubt but that they are gone off together."

Even lady Juliana was shocked at this intelligence, though the folly, more than the wickedness, of the thing, seemed to strike her mind; but Henry was no nice observer, and was therefore completely satisfied with the disapprobation she expressed for her sister-in-law's conduct.

"I am so sorry for poor dear Lindore," said lady Juliana, after having exhausted herself in invectives against his wife: "Such a generous creature as he to be used in such a manner—it is quite shocking to think of it! If he had been an ill-natured stingy wretch, it would have been nothing; but Frederick is such a noble-hearted fellow—I dare say he would give me a thousand pounds if I were to ask him, for he don't care about money."

"Lord Lindore takes the matter very coolly, I understand," replied her husband; "but—don't be alarmed, dear Julia—your father has suffered a little from the violence of his feelings. He has had a sort of apoplectic fit, but is not considered in immediate danger."

Lady Juliana burst into tears, desired the carriage might be put up, as she would not go out, and even declared her intention of abstaining from Mrs. *D.'s assembly* that evening. Henry warmly com-

mended the extreme propriety of these measures; and, not to be outdone in greatness of mind, most heroically sent an apology to a grand military dinner at the Duke of Y——; observing, at the same time, that, in the present state of the family, one or two friends to a quiet family dinner was as much as they should be up to.

CHAPTER XXII.

——"I but purpose to embark with thee,
On the smooth surface of a summer sea,
While gentle zephyrs play in prosp'rous gales,
And fortune's favour fills the swelling sails."——
Henry and Emma.

How long these voluntary sacrifices to duty and propriety might have been made, it would not be difficult to guess; but lady Juliana's approaching confinement rendered her seclusion more and more a matter of necessity; and shortly after these events took place, she presented her delighted husband with a son. Henry lost no time in announcing the birth of his child to General Cameron; and, at the same time, requested he would stand godfather, and give his name to the child. The answer was as follows:—

"*Hort Lodge, Berks.*

"DEAR HENRY,

"By this time twelvemonth, I hope it will be my turn to communicate to you a similar event in my family, to that which your letter announces to me. As a preliminary step, I am just about to march into quarters for life, with a young woman, daughter to my steward. She is healthy, good humoured, and of course vulgar; since she is no connoisseur in china, and never spoke to a pug-dog in her life.

"Your allowance will be remitted regularly from my Banker until the day of my death; you will then succeed to ten thousand pounds, secured to your children, which is all you have to expect from me. If, after this, you think it worth your while, you are very welcome to give your son the name of your's faithfully,

"WILLIAM CAMERON."

Henry's consternation at the contents of this epistle was almost equalled by Juliana's indignation.

The daughter of a steward!—heavens! it made her sick to think of it. It was too shocking! The man ought to be shut up. Henry ought to prevent him from disgracing his connexions in such a manner—There ought to be a law against old men marrying—"

"And young ones too," groaned Douglas, as he thought of the debts he had contracted on the faith and credit of being the General's heir; for with all the sanguine presumption of thoughtless youth, and buoyant spirits, Henry had no sooner found his fault forgiven, than he immediately fancied it forgotten, and himself completely restored to favour. His friends and the world were of the same opinion; and, as the future possessor of immense wealth, he found nothing so easy as to borrow money and contract debts, which he now saw the impossibility of ever discharging. Still he flattered himself the General might only mean to frighten him; or he might relent; or the marriage might go off; or he might not have any children; and, with these *mighty* hopes, things went on as usual for some time longer. Lady Juliana, who, to do her justice, was not of a more desponding character than her husband, had also her stock of hopes and expectations always ready to act upon. She was quite sure, that if papa ever came to his senses, (for he had remained in a state of stupefaction since the apoplectic stroke,) he would forgive her, and take her to live with him, now that that vile lady Lindore was gone: or, if he should never recover, she was equally sure of benefiting by his death; for though he had said he was not to leave her a shilling, she did not believe it: She was sure papa would never do any thing so cruel; and, at any rate, if he did, Lindore was so generous, he would do something very handsome for her; and so forth.

At length the bubbles burst.—The same paper that stated the marriage of General William Cameron, *to Judith* Broadcast, spinster, announcing, in *all the dignity* of wo, the death of that most rev-

erend nobleman, and eminent statesman, Augustus Earl of Courtland.

In weak minds, it has generally been remarked, that no medium can be maintained. Where hope holds her dominion, she is too buoyant to be accompanied by her anchor; and between her and despair there are no gradations. Desperate, indeed, now became the condition of the mis-judging pair. Lady Juliana's name was not even mentioned in her father's will, and the General's marriage rendered his settlements no longer a secret. In all the horrors of desperation, Henry now found himself daily beset by creditors of every description. At length the fatal blow came. Horses—carriages—every thing they could call their own, were seized. The term for which they held the house was expired, and they found themselves on the point of being turned into the street; when lady Juliana, who had been for two days, as her woman expressed it, *out of one fit into another*, suddenly recovered strength to signify her desire of being conveyed to her brother's house. A hackney coach was procured, into which the hapless victim of her own follies was carried. Shuddering with disgust, and accompanied by her children and their attendants, she was set down at the noble mansion from which she had fled two years before.

Her brother, whom she fortunately found at home, lolling upon the sofa with a new novel in his hand, received her without any marks of surprise; said those things happened every day; hoped Captain Douglas would contrive to get himself extricated from this slight embarrassment; and informed his sister that she was welcome to occupy her old apartments, which had been lately fitted up for Lady Lindore. Then ringing the bell, he desired the housekeeper might show Lady Juliana up stairs, and put the children in the nursery; mentioned that he generally dined at eight o'clock; and, *nodding* to his sister as she quitted the room, re-

turned to his book, as if nothing had occurred to disturb him from it.

In ten minutes after her entrance into Courtland house, Lady Juliana had made greater advances in *religion* and *philosophy* than she had done in the whole nineteen years of her life; for she not only perceived that "out of evil cometh good;" but was perfectly ready to admit that "all is for the best," and that "whatever is, is right."

"How lucky is it for me," exclaimed she to herself, as she surveyed the splendid suite of apartments that were destined for her accommodation—"how very fortunate that things have turned out as they have done; that Lady Lindore should have run off, and that the General's marriage should have taken place, just at the time of poor papa's death"—and, in short, Lady Juliana set no bounds to her self-gratulations, on the happy turn of affairs which had brought about this change in her situation.

To a heart not wholly devoid of feeling, and a mind capable of any thing like reflection, the desolate appearance of this magnificent mansion would have excited emotions of a very different nature. The apartments of the late Earl, with their wide extended doors and windows, sheeted furniture, and air of dreary order, exhibited that waste and chilling aspect, which marks the chambers of death; and even Lady Juliana shuddered, she knew not why, as she passed through them.

Those of lady Lindore presented a picture not less striking, could her thoughtless successor have profited by the lesson they offered. Here was all that the most capricious fancy, the most boundless extravagance, the most refined luxury, could wish for or suggest. The bed-chamber, dressing-room, and boudoir, were each fitted up in a style that seemed rather suited for the pleasures of an Eastern sultana, or Grecian courtezan, than for the domestic comfort of a British matron.

"I wonder how Lady Lindore could find in her heart to leave this delicious boudoir," observed Lady Juliana to the old housekeeper.

"I rather wonder, my Lady, how she could find it in her heart to leave these pretty babes," returned the good woman, as a little boy came running into the room, calling, "mamma, mamma!" Lady Juliana had nothing to say to children beyond a "how d'ye do, love;" and the child, after regarding her for a moment with a look of disappointment, ran away back to his nursery.

When lady Juliana had fairly settled herself in her new apartments, and the tumult of delight began to subside, it occurred to her that something must be done for poor Harry, whom she had left in the hands of a brother officer, in a state little short of distraction. She accordingly went in search of her brother, to request his advice and assistance, and found him, it being nearly dark, preparing to set out on his morning's ride. Upon hearing the situation of his brother-in-law, he declared himself ready to assist Mr. Douglas as far as he was able, but he had just learned from his people of business, that his own affairs were somewhat involved. The late Earl had expended enormous sums on political purposes— lady Lindore had run through a prodigious deal of money, he believed; and he himself had some debts, amounting, he was told, to seventy thousand pounds. Lady Juliana was all aghast at this information, which was delivered with the most perfect *nonchalance* by the Earl, while he amused himself with his Newfoundland dog. Unable to conceal her disappointment at these effects of her brother's "liberality and generosity," lady Juliana burst into tears.

The Earl's sensibility was akin to his generosity; he gave money, (or rather allowed it to be taken,) freely when he had it, from indolence and easiness of temper; he hated the sight of distress in any *individual*, because it occasioned trouble, and was,

in short, a *bore*.. He therefore made haste to relieve his sister's alarm, by assuring her that these were mere trifles. That, as for Douglas' affairs, he would order his agent to arrange every thing in his name—hoped to have the pleasure of seeing him at dinner—recommended to his sister to have some pheasant pies for luncheon—and, calling Carlo, set out upon his ride.

However much lady Juliana had felt mortified and disappointed at learning the state of her brother's finances, she began, by degrees, to extract the greatest consolation from the comparative insignificance of her own debts to those of the Earl; and, accordingly, in high spirits at this newly discovered and judicious source of comfort, she despatched the following note to her husband.

"DEAREST HENRY,

"I have been received in the kindest manner imaginable by Frederick, and have been put in possession of my old apartments, which are so much altered, I should never have known them. They were furnished by lady Lindore, who really has a divine taste. I long to show you all the delights of this abode. Frederick desired me to say, that he expects to see you here at dinner, and that he will take charge of paying all our bills whenever he gets money. Only think of his owing a hundred thousand pounds, besides all papa's and lady Lindore's debts! I assure you I was almost ashamed to tell him of ours, they sounded so trifling; but it is quite a relief to find other people so much worse. Indeed I always thought it quite natural for us to run in debt, considering that we had no money to pay any thing, while Courtland, who is as rich as a Jew, is so hampered. I shall expect you at eight, until when, adieu, *mio caro*,

"YOUR JULIE.

"I am quite wretched about you."

This tender and consolatory billet Henry had not the satisfaction of receiving, having been arrested, shortly after his wife's departure, at the suit of Mr. Shagg, for the sum of two thousand some odd hundreds, for carriages jobbed, bought, exchanged, repaired, returned, &c.

Lady Juliana's horror and dismay at the news of her husband's arrest was excessive. Her only ideas of confinement were taken from those pictures of the Bastile and Inquisition, that she had read so much of in French and German novels; and the idea of a prison was indissolubly united in her mind with bread and water, chains and straw, dungeons and darkness. Callous and selfish, therefore, as she might be, she was not yet so wholly void of all natural feeling as to think with indifference of the man she had once fondly loved reduced to such a pitiable condition.

Almost frantic at the phantom of her own creation, she flew to her brother's apartment, and, in the wildest and most incoherent manner, besought him to rescue her poor Henry from chains and a dungeon.

With some difficulty Lord Courtland at length apprehended the extent of his brother-in-law's misfortune; and, with his usual *sang froid*, smiled at his sister's simplicity, assuring her the King's Bench was the pleasantest place in the world; that some of his own most particular friends were there, who gave capital dinners, and led the most desirable lives imaginable.

"And will he really not be fed on bread and water, and wear chains, and sleep upon straw?" asked the tender wife, in the utmost surprise and delight: "Oh, then he is not so much to be pitied, though I daresay he would rather get out of prison too."

The Earl promised to obtain his release the following day, and lady Juliana returned to her toilette, *with a much higher opinion of prisons than she had ever entertained before.*

Lord Courtland, for once in his life, was punctual to his promise; and even interested himself so thoroughly in Douglas' affairs, though without inquiring into any particulars, as to take upon himself the discharge of his debts, and to procure leave for him to exchange into a regiment of the line, then under orders for India.

Upon hearing of this arrangement, lady Juliana's grief and despair, as usual, set all reason at defiance. She would not suffer her dear, dear Harry, to leave her. She knew she could not live without him—she was sure she should die; and Harry would be sea-sick, and grow so yellow, and so ugly, that, when he came back, she should never have any comfort in him again.

Henry, who had never doubted her readiness to accompany him, immediately hastened to assuage her anguish, by assuring her, that it had always been his intention to take her along with him.

That was worse and worse—she wondered how he could be so barbarous and absurd as to think of her leaving all her friends, and going to live amongst savages. She had done a great deal in living so long contentedly with him in Scotland; but she never could, nor would make, such another sacrifice. Besides, she was sure poor Courtland could not do without her; she knew he never would marry again; and who would take care of his dear children, and educate them properly, if she did not? It would be too ungrateful to desert Frederick, after all he had done for them.

The pride of the man, as much as the affection of the husband, was irritated by this resistance to his will; and a violent scene of reproach and recrimination terminated in an eternal farewell.

CHAPTER XXIII.

"In age, in infancy, from others aid
Is all our hope; to teach us to be kind,
That nature's first, last lesson." YOUNG.

THE neglected daughter of lady Juliana Douglas, experienced all the advantages naturally to be expected from her change of situation. Her watchful aunt superintended the years of her infancy, and all that a tender and judicious mother *could* do—all that most mothers *think* they do—she performed. Mrs. Douglas, though not a woman either of words or systems, possessed a reflecting mind, and a heart warm with benevolence towards every think that had a being; and all the best feelings of her nature were excited by the little outcast, thus abandoned by her unnatural parent. As she pressed the unconscious babe to her bosom, she thought how blest she should have been, had a child of her own thus filled her arms; but the reflection called forth no selfish murmurs from her chastened spirit. While the tear of soft regret trembled in her eye, that eye was yet raised in gratitude to heaven for having called forth those delightful affections which might otherwise have slumbered in her heart.

Mrs. Douglas had read much, and reflected more; and many faultless theories of education had floated in her mind. But her good sense soon discovered how unavailing all theories were, whose foundations rested upon the inferred wisdom of the teacher; and how intricate and unwieldly must be the machinery for the human mind, where the human hand alone is to guide and uphold it. To engraft into her infant soul the purest principles of religion, was therefore the chief aim of Mary's preceptress. The fear of God was the only restraint *imposed* upon her dawning intellect; and from the

Bible alone was she taught the duties of morality—not in the form of a dry code of laws, to be read with a solemn face on Sundays, or learned with weeping eyes as a week-day task—but adapted to her youthful capacity by judicious illustration, and familiarized to her taste by hearing its stories and precepts from the lips she best loved. Mrs. Douglas was the friend and confidant of her pupil: to her all her hopes and fears, wishes and dreads, were confided; and the first effort of her reason was the discovery, that to please her aunt, she must study to please her Maker.

"L'inutilité de la vie des femmes, est la premier source de leurs desordrés."

Mrs. Douglas was fully convinced of the truth of this observation, and that the mere selfish cares and vulgar bustle of life are not sufficient to satisfy the immortal soul, however they may serve to engross it.

A portion of Mary's time was therefore devoted to the daily practice of the great duties of life; in administering, in some shape or other, to the wants and misfortunes of her fellow-creatures, without requiring from them that their virtue should have been immaculate, or expecting that their gratitude should be everlasting.

"It is better," thought Mrs. Douglas, "that we should sometimes be deceived by others, than that we should learn to deceive ourselves; and the charity and good will that is suffered to lie dormant, or feed itself on speculative acts of beneficence, for want of proper objects to call it into use, will soon become the corroding rust that will destroy the best feelings of our nature."

But, although Mary strenuously applied herself to the uses of life, its embellishments were by no means neglected. She was happily endowed by nature; and, under the judicious management of her aunt, made rapid though unostentatious progress in the improvement of the talents committed

to her care. Without having been blessed with the advantages of a dancing-master, her step was light, and her motions free and graceful; and if her aunt had not been able to impart to her the favourite graces of the most fashionable singer of the day, neither had she thwarted the efforts of her own natural taste, in forming a style full of simplicity and feeling. In the modern languages she was perfectly skilled; and if her drawings wanted the enlivening touches of the master to give them effect, as an atonement, they displayed a perfect knowledge of the rules of perspective and the study of the bust.

All this was however mere leather and prunella to the ladies of Glenfern; and many were the cogitations and consultations that took place on the subject of Mary's mismanagement. According to their ideas, there could be but one good system of education; and that was the one that had been pursued with them, and through them transmitted to their nieces.

To attend the parish church, and remember the text; to observe who was there, and who was *not* there; and to wind up the evening with a sermon stuttered and stammered through by one of the girls, (the worst reader always piously selected, for the purpose of improving their reading,) and particularly addressed to the Laird, openly and avowedly snoring in his arm chair, though at every pause starting up with a peevish "Weel!"—this was the sum total of their religious duties. Their moral virtues were much upon the same scale; to knit stockings, scold servants, cement china, trim bonnets, lecture the poor, and look up to lady Maclaughlan, comprised nearly their whole code. But these were the virtues of ripened years and enlarged understandings; what their pupils might hope to arrive at, but could not presume to meddle with. *Their* merits consisted in being compelled to sew *certain* large portions of white work; learning to

read and write in the worst manner; occasionally *wearing* a *collar*, and learning the notes on the spinnet. These acquirements, accompanied with a great deal of lecturing and fault-finding, sufficed for the first fifteen years; when the two next, passed at a provincial boarding school, were supposed to impart every graceful accomplishment to which woman could attain.

Mrs. Douglas' method of conveying instruction, it may easily be imagined, did not square with their ideas on that subject. They did nothing themselves without a bustle, and to do a thing quietly, was to them the same as not doing it at all—it could not be done, for nobody had ever heard of it. In short, like many other worthy people, their ears were their only organs of intelligence—they believed every thing they were told; but, unless they were told, they believed nothing. They had never heard Mrs. Douglas expatiate on the importance of the trust reposed in her, or enlarge on the difficulties of female education; *ergo* Mrs. Douglas could have no idea of the nature of the duties she had undertaken.

Their visits to Lochmarlie only served to confirm the fact. Miss Jacky deponed, that during the month she was there, she never could discover when or how it was, that Mary got her lessons; luckily the child was quick, and had contrived, poor thing! to pick up things wonderfully, nobody knew how, for it was really astonishing to see how little pains were bestowed upon her; and the worst of it was, that she seemed to do just as she liked, for nobody ever heard her reproved, and every body knew that young people never could have enough said to them. All this differed widely from the *eclat* of their system, and could not fail of causing great disquiet to the sisters.

"I declare, I am quite confounded at all this!" said Miss Grizzy, at the conclusion of Miss Jacky's communication. "It really appears, as if Mary,

poor thing! was getting no education at all; and yet she *can* do things, too. I can't understand it; and it's very odd in Mrs. Douglas to allow her to be so much neglected, for certainly Mary's constantly with herself; which, to be sure, shows that she is very much spoilt; for although our girls are as fond of us as, I am sure, any creatures can be, yet at the same time, they are always very glad—which is quite natural—to run away from us."

"I think it's high time Mary had done something fit to be seen," said Miss Nicky. "She is now sixteen past."

"Most girls of Mary's time of life, that ever *I* had any thing to do with," replied Jacky, with a certain wave of the head, peculiar to sensible women, "had something to show before her age. Bella had worked the globe long before she was sixteen; and Babby did her filigree tea-caddy the first quarter she was at Miss Macgowk's," glancing with triumph from the one which hung over the mantle-piece, to the other which stood on the tea-table, shrouded in a green bag.

"And to be sure," rejoined Grizzy, "although Betsey's screen did cost a great deal of money—that can't be denied; and her father certainly grudged it very much at the time—there's no doubt of that; yet certainly it does her the greatest credit, and it is a great satisfaction to us all to have these things to show. I am sure nobody would ever think that ass was made of crape, and how naturally it seems to be eating the beautiful chenille thistle! I declare, I think the ass is as like an ass as any thing can be!"

"And as to Mary's drawing" continued the narrator of her deficiences, "there is not one of them fit for framing; mere scratches with a chalk pencil—what any child might do."

"And to think," said Nicky, with indignation, "how little Miss Douglas seemed to think of the

handsome coloured views the girls did at Miss Macgowk's."

"All our girls have the greatest genius for drawing," observed Grizzy; "there can be no doubt of that; but it's a thousand pities, I'm sure, that none of them seem to like it. To be sure, they say—what I dare say is very true—that they can't get such good paper as they got at Miss Macgowk's; but they have showed that they *can* do, for their drawings are quite astonishing. Somebody lately took them to be Mr. Touchup's own doing; and I'm sure there could'nt be a greater compliment than that! I represented all that to Mrs. Douglas, and urged her very strongly to give Mary the benefit of, at least, a quarter of Miss Macgowk's, were it only for the sake of her carriage; or, at least, to make her wear our collar."

This was the tenderest of all themes, and bursts of sorrowful exclamations ensued. The collar had long been a galling yoke upon their minds; its iron had entered into their very souls; for it was a collar, presented to the family of Glenfern, by the wisest, virtuousest, best of women, and of grandmothers, the good lady Girnachgowl; and had been worn in regular rotation by every female of the family, till now, that Mrs. Douglas positively refused to subject Mary's pliant form to its thraldom. Even the Laird, albeit no connoisseur in any shapes, save those of his kine, was of opinion, that since the thing was in the house, it was a pity it should be lost. Not Venus' girdle even was supposed to confer greater charms than the Girnachgowl collar.

"It's really most distressing!" said Miss Grizzy, to her friend lady Maclaughlan. "Mary's back won't be worth a farthing; and we have always been quite famous for our backs."

"Humph!—that's the reason people are always so glad to see them, child."

With regard to Mary's looks, opinions were not so decided. Mrs. Douglas thought her, what she

was, an elegant interesting looking girl. The Laird, as he peered at her over his spectacles, pronounced her to be but a shilpit thing, though weel aneugh, considering the neerdo-weels that were aught her. Miss Jacky opined, that she would have been quite a different creature, had she been brought up like any other girl. Miss Grizzy did not know what to think; she certainly was pretty—nobody could dispute that. At the same time, many people would prefer Bella's looks; and Babby was certainly uncommonly comely. Miss Nicky thought it was no wonder she looked pale sometimes. She never supped her broth in a wise-like way at dinner; and it was a shame to hear of a girl of Mary's age being set up with tea to her breakfast, and wearing white petticoats in winter—and such roads, too!

Lady Maclaughlan pronounced, (and that was next to a special revelation,) that the girl would be handsome when she was forty, not a day sooner; and she would be clever, for her mother was a fool; and foolish mothers had always wise children, and *vice versa*, "and your mother was a very clever woman, girls—humph!"

Thus passed the early years of the almost forgotten twin; blest in the warm affection and mild authority of her more than mother. Sometimes Mrs. Douglas half-formed the wish, that her beloved pupil should mix in society, and become known to the world; but when she reflected on the dangers of that world, and on the little solid happiness its pleasures afford, she repressed the wish, and only prayed she might be allowed to rest secure in the simple pleasures she then enjoyed. "Happiness is not a plant of this earth," said she to herself with a sigh; "but God gives peace and tranquillity to the virtuous in all situations, and under every trial. Let me then strive to make Mary virtuous, and leave the rest to Him who alone knoweth what is *good for us*!"

CHAPTER XXIV.

"The immortal line in sure succession reigns,
The fortune of the family remains,
And grandsires' grandsons the long list contains."
DRYDEN'S *Virgil.*

——————"We are such stuff
As dreams are made on; and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep."
Tempest.

BUT Mary's back, and Mary's complexion, now ceased to be the first objects of interest at Glenfern; for, to the inexpressible delight and amazement of the sisters, Mrs. Douglas, after due warning, became the mother of a son. How this event had been brought about without the intervention of Lady Maclaughlan, was past the powers of Miss Grizzy's comprehension. To the last moment they had been skeptical; for Lady Maclaughlan had shook her head, and humphed whenever the subject was mentioned. For several months they had therefore vibrated between their own sanguine hopes, and their oracle's disheartening doubts; and, even when the truth was manifest, a sort of vague tremor took possession of their mind as to what Lady Maclaughlan would think of it.

"I declare I don't very well know how to announce this happy event to Lady Maclaughlan," said Miss Grizzy, as she sat in a ruminating posture, with her pen in her hand; "it will give her the

greatest pleasure I know that: she has such a regard for our family, she would go any lengths for us. At the same time, every body must be sensible it is a delicate matter to tell a person of Lady Maclaughlan's skill they have been mistaken. I'm sure I don't know how she may take it; and yet she can't suppose it will make any difference in our sentiments for her. She must be sensible we have all the greatest respect for her opinion."

"The wisest people are sometimes mistaken," observed Miss Jacky.

"I'm sure, Jacky, that's very true," said Grizzy, brightening up at the brilliancy of this remark.

"And it's better she should have been mistaken than Mrs. Douglas," followed up Miss Nicky.

"I declare, Nicky, you are perfectly right; and I shall just say so at once to Lady Maclaughlan."

The epistle was forthwith commenced by the enlightened Grizelda. Miss Joan applied herself to the study of "The whole Duty of Man," which she was determined to make herself mistress of for the benefit of her grand-nephew; and Miss Nicholas fell to reckoning all who could, would, or should be at the christening, that she might calculate upon the quantity of *dreaming-bread* that would be required. The younger ladies were busily engaged in divers and sundry disputes regarding the right to succession to a once white lutestring negligée of their mother's, which three of them had laid their accounts with figuring in at the approaching celebration. The old gentleman was the only one in the family who took the least of the general happiness. He had got into a habit of being fretted about every thing that happened, and he could not entirely divest himself of it even upon this occasion. His parsimonious turns, too, had considerably increased; and his only criterion of judging

of any thing was according to what it would bring.

"Sorra tak me, if ane wad nae think, to hear ye, this was the first bairn that e'er was born! What's a' the fraize aboot, ye gowks? (to his daughters)—a whingin get! that'll tak mair oot o' fowk's pockets than e'er it'll pit into them! Mony a good profitable beast's been brought into the warld, and ne'r a word in'ts heed."

All went on smoothly. Lady Maclaughlan testified no resentment, Miss Jacky had "*The Whole Duty of Man*" at her finger-ends; and Miss Nicky was not more severe than could have been expected, considering, as she did, how the servants at Lochmarlie must be living at rack and manger. It had been decided at Glenfern, that the infant heir to its consequence could not, with propriety, be christened any where but at the seat of his forefathers. Mr. and Mrs. Douglass had good-humouredly yielded the point; and, as she was able for the change, the whole family took up their residence for a season under the paternal roof.

Blissful visions floated around the pillows of the happy spinsters the night preceding the christening, which were duly detailed at the breakfast-table the following morning.

"I declare I don't know what to think of my dream," began Miss Grizzy: "I dreamt that Lady Maclaughlan was upon her knees to you brother, to get you to take an emetic; and, just as she had mixed it up so nicely in some of our black currant jelly little Norman snatched it out of your hand, and ran away with it."

"You're aneugh to turn ony body's stamick wi' your nonsense," returned the Laird gruffly.

"And I," said Miss Jacky, "thought I saw you standing in your shirt, brother, as straight as a rash and good Lady Girnachgowl buckling her collar upon you with her own hands."

"I wish ye wad na deive me wi' your havers!" still more indignantly, and turning his shoulder to the fair dreamer, as he continued to con over the newspaper.

"And I," cried Miss Nicky, eager to get her mystic tale disclosed, "I thought, brother, I saw you take and throw all the good dreaming-bread into the ash-hole."

"By my troth, an' ye deserve to be thrown after't!" exclaimed the exasperated Laird, as he quitted the room in high wrath, muttering to himself, "Hard case—canna get peace—eat my vittles—fules—tawpies—clavers!" &c. &c.

"I declare I can't conceive why Glenfern should be so ill pleased at our dreams," said Miss Grizzy. "Every body knows dreams are always contrary, and, even were it otherwise, I'm sure I should think no shame to take an emetic, especially when Lady Maclaughlan was at the trouble of mixing it up so nicely."

"And we have all worn good Lady Girnachgowl's collar before now," said Miss Jacky.

"I think I had the worst of it, that had all my good dreaming-bread destroyed," added Miss Nicky.

"Nothing could be more natural than your dreams," said Mrs. Douglas, "considering how all these subjects have engrossed you for some time past. You, aunt Grizzy, may remember how desirous you were of administering one of Lady Maclaughlan's powders to my little boy yesterday; and you, aunt Jacky, made a point of trying Lady Girnachgowl's collar upon Mary, to convince her how pleasant it was; while you, aunt Nicky, had experienced a great alarm in supposing your cake had been burned in the oven. And these being the most vivid impressions you had received during the day, it was perfectly natural that they should have retained their influence during a portion of the night.

The interpretations were received with high disdain. One and all declared they never dreamed of any thing that *had* occurred; and therefore the visions of the night portended some extraordinary good fortune to the family in general, and to little Norman in particular.

"The best fortune I can wish for him, and all of us for this day, is, that he should remain quiet during the ceremony," said his mother, who was not so elated as Lady Macbeth at the predictions of the sisters.

The christening party mustered strong; and the rites of baptism were duly performed by the Rev. Duncan M'Drone. The little Christian had been kissed by every lady in company, and pronounced by the matrons to be "a dainty little *doug!*" and by the misses to be "the sweetest lamb they had ever seen!" The cake and wine was in its progress round the company; when, upon its being tendered to the old gentleman, who was sitting silent in his arm-chair, he abruptly exclaimed, in a most discordant voice, "Hey! what's a' this wastery for?" —and, ere an answer could be returned, his jaw dropped, his eyes fixed, and the Laird of Glenfern ceased to breathe!

CHAPTER XXV.

"They say miracles are past; and we have our philosophical persons to make modern and familiar things supernatural and causeless. Hence it is, that we make trifles of terrors; ensconcing ourselves into seeming knowledge, when we should submit ourselves to an unknown fear."

ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.

ALL attempts to reanimate the lifeless form proved unavailing; and the horror and consternation that reigned in the castle of Glenfern may be imagined, but cannot be described. There is perhaps, no feeling of our nature so vague, so complicated, so mysterious, as that with which we look upon the cold remains of our fellow-mortals. The dignity with which death invests even the meanest of his victims, inspires us with an awe no living thing can create. The monarch on his throne is less awful than the beggar in his shroud. The marble features —the powerless hand—the stiffened limbs—oh! who can contemplate these with feelings that can be defined? These are the mockery of all our hopes and fears, our fondest love, our fellest hate. Can it be, that we now shrink with horror from the touch of that hand, which but yesterday was fondly clasped in our own? Is that tongue, whose accents even now dwell in our ear, for ever chained in the silence of death? These black and heavy eye-lids, are they for ever to seal up in darkness ,the eyes whose glance no earthly power could restrain? And the spirit which animated the clay, where is it now?

Is it wrapt in bliss, or dissolved in wo? Does it witness our grief, and share our sorrows? Or is the mysterious tye that linked it with mortality forever broken? and the remembrance of earthly scenes, are they indeed to the enfranchised spirit as the morning dream, or the dew upon the early flower? Reflections such as these naturally arise in every breast. Their influence is felt, though their import cannot always be expressed. The principle is in all the same, however it may differ in its operations.

In the family assembled round the lifeless form, that had so long been the centre of their domestic circle, grief showed itself under various forms. The calm and manly sorrow of the son; the saint-like feelings of his wife; the youthful agitation of Mary; the weak superstitious wailings of the sisters; and the loud uncontrolled lamentations of the daughters; all betokened an intensity of suffering that arose from the same source, varied according to the different channels in which it flowed. Even the stern Lady Maclaughlan was subdued to something of kindred feeling; and though no tears dropped from her eyes, she sat by her friends, and sought, in her own way, to soften their affliction.

The assembled guests, who had not yet been able to take their departure, remained in the drawing-room in a sort of restless solemnity peculiar to seasons of collateral affliction, where all seem to heighten the effect upon others, and shift the lesson from themselves. Various were the surmises and speculations as to the cause of the awful transition that had just taken place.

"Glenfern was nae like a man that wad hae gaen aff in this gate," said one.

"I dinna ken," said another, "I've notic'd a chainge on Glenfern for a gay wile noo."

"I agree wi' you, Sir," said a third: "In my mind, Glenfern's been droopin' very sair ever since the last tryst."

"At Glenfern's time o' life, its no surprisin'," remarked a fourth: who felt perfectly secure of being fifteen years his junior.

"Glenfern was na that auld neither," retorted a fifth; whose conscience smote him with being several years his senior.

"But he had a deal o' vexation frae his faemilly," said an elderly bachelor.

"Ye offen see a hale stoot man, like our puir freend, gang like the snuff o' a cannel," coughed up a pthisicky gentleman.

"He was a fume boss-looking man, ever since I mind him," wheezed out a swoln asthmatic figure.

"An' he took nae care o' himsel," said the Laird of Pettlechass. "His diet was nae what it should hae been at his time o' life. An' he was oot an' in, up an' doon, in a' wathers, wat an' dry."

"Glenfern's doings had naething to du wi' his death," said an ancient gentlewoman with solemnity. "They maun ken little wha ne'er heard the bod-word of the family." And she repeated in Gaelic words to the following effect:

"When Lochdow shall turn to a lin,*
In Glenfern ye'll hear the din;
When frae Benenck they shool the sna',
O'er Glenfern the leaves will fa';
When foreign geer grows on Benenck tap'
Then the fir tree will be Glenfern's hap."

"An' noo, ma'am, will ye be sae gude as point oot the meanin' o' this freet," said an incredulous looking member of the company; "for when I passed Lochdow this mornin', I neither saw nor heard o' a lin; an' frae this window we can aw see Benenck wi' his white night-cap on; an' he wad hae little to do that wad try to shool it aff."

"It's neither o' the still water, nor the stay brae, that the word was spoke," replied the dame,

* Cataract.

with a disdainful frown; "they tak nae part in our doing: but kent ye nae that Lockdow himself had tined his sight in a cataract; an' is nae there dule an' din aneuch in Glenfern the day? An' kent ye nae that Benenck had his auld white pow shaven, an' that he's gettin' a jeezy frae Edinburgh?—an' I'se warren he'll be in his braw wig the very day that Glenfern'll be laid in his coffin."

The company admitted the application was too close to be resisted; but the same skeptic (who, by the bye, was only a low country merchant, elevated by purchase, to the dignity of a Highland laird,) was seen to shrug his shoulders, and heard to make some sneering remarks on the days of second sights, and such superstitious nonsense, being past. This was instantly laid hold of; and, amongst many others of the same sort, the truth of the following story was attested by one of the party, as having actually occurred in his family within his own remembrance.

"As Duncan M'Crea was one evening desending Benvoilloich, he perceived a funeral procession in the vale beneath. He was greatly surprised, not having heard of any death in the country; and this appeared to be the burial of some person of consequence, from the number of the attendants. He made all the haste he could to get down: and, as he drew near, he counted all the lairds of the country except my father, Sir Murdoch. He was astonished at this till he recollected that he was away to the low country to his cousin's marriage; but he felt curious to know who it was, though some unaccountable feeling prevented him from mixing with the followers. He therefore kept on the ridge of the hill, right over their heads, and near enough to hear them speak; but although he saw them move their lips, no sound reached his ears. He kept along with the procession in this way, till it reached the Castle Dochart burying ground, and there it stopped. The evening was

close and warm, and a thick mist had gathered in the glen, while the tops of the hills shone like gold. Not a breath of air was stirring: but the trees that grew round the burying-ground, waved and soughed, and some withered leaves were swirled round and round as if by the wind. The company stood awhile to rest, and then they proceeded to open the iron gates of the burying-ground: but the lock was rusted and would not open. Then they began to pull down part of the wall: and Duncan thought how angry his master would be at this, and he raised his voice, and shouted, and hallooed to them, but to no purpose. Nobody seemed to hear him. At last the wall was taken down, and the coffin was lifted over, and just then the sun broke out, and glinted on a new made grave; and as they were laying the coffin in it, it gave way and discovered Sir Murdoch himself in his dead clothes; and then the mist grew so thick, Duncan could see no more, and how to get home he knew not; but when he entered his own door he was bathed in sweat, and white as any corpse; but all that he could say was, that he had seen Castle Dochart's burying.

"The following day," continued the narrator, "he was more composed, and gave the account you have now heard; and three days after came the intelligence of my father's death. He had dropt down in a fit that very evening, when entertaining a large company in honour of his cousin's marriage; and that day week his funeral passed through Glenvalloch exactly as described by Duncan M'Crae, with all the particulars: The gates of the burying-ground could not be opened; part of the wall was taken down to admit the coffin, which received some injury, and gave way as they were placing it in the grave."

Even the low country infidel was silenced by the solemnity of this story; and soon after the compa-

ny dispersed, every one panting to be the first to circulate the intelligence of Glenfern's death.

But soon!—Oh, how soon!—"dies in human hearts the thought of death!"—Even the paltry detail which death creates, serves to detach our minds from the cause itself. So it was with the family of Glenfern. Their light did not "shine inward;" and after the first burst of sorrow, their ideas fastened with avidity on all the paraphernalia of affliction. Mr. Douglas, indeed, found much to do, and to direct to be done. The elder ladies began to calculate how many yards of broad hemming would be required, and to form a muster-roll of the company; with this improvement, that it was to be ten times as numerous as the one that had assembled at the christening: while the young ones busied their imaginations as to the effect of new mournings—a luxury to them hitherto unknown. Mrs. Douglas and Mary were differently affected. Religion and reflection had taught the former the enviable lesson of possessing her soul with patience under every trial; and while she inwardly mourned the fate of the poor old man who had been thus suddenly snatched from the only world that ever had engaged his thoughts, her outward aspect was calm and serene. The impression made upon Mary's feelings was of a more powerful nature. She had witnessed suffering, and watched by sick-beds; but death, and death in so terrific a form, was new to her. She had been standing by her grandfather's chair—her head was bent to his—her hand rested upon his, when by a momentary convulsion, she beheld the last dread change—the living man transformed into the lifeless corpse. The countenance but now fraught with life and human thoughts, in the twinkling of an eye was covered with the shades of death! It was in vain that Mary prayed, and reasoned, and strove against the feeling that had been thus powerfully excited. One object alone possessed her imagination—the image

of her grandfather dying—dead; his grim features—his ghastly visage—his convulsive grasp—were ever present, by day and by night. Her nervous system had received a shock too powerful for all the strength of her understanding to contend with. Mrs. Douglas sought, by every means to soothe her feelings, and divert her attention; and flattered herself that a short time would allay the perturbation of her youthful emotions.

Five hundred persons, horse and foot, high and low, male and female, graced the obsequies of the Laird of Glenfern. Benenck was there in his new wig, and the autumnal leaves dropped on the coffin, as it was borne slowly along the vale!

CHAPTER XXVI.

"It is no diminution, but a recommendation of human nature, that, in some instances, passion gets the better of reason, and all that we can think, is impotent against half what we feel."

SPECTATOR.

"LIFE is a mingled yarn;" few of its afflictions but are accompanied with some alleviation—none of its blessings that do not bring some alloy. Like most other events, that long have formed the object of yearning and almost hopeless wishes, and on which have been built the fairest structure of human felicity, the arrival of the young heir of Glenfern produced a less extraordinary degree of happiness than had been anticipated. The melancholy event which had marked the first ceremonial of his life, had cast its gloom alike on all nearly connected with him; and when time had dispelled the clouds of recent mourning, and restored the mourners to their habitual train of thought and action, somewhat of the novelty, which had given him such lively interest in the hearts of the sisters, had subsided. The distressing conviction, too, more and more forced itself upon them, that their advice and assistance were likely to be wholly overlooked in the nurture of the infant mind, and management of the thriving frame of their little nephew. Their active energies, therefore, driven back to the accustomed channels, after many murmurs and severe struggles again revolved in the same sphere as before. True, they sighed and mourned for a time, but soon found

occupation congenial to their nature in the little departments of life; dressing crape; reviving black silk; converting narrow hems into broad hems; and, in short, who so busy, who so important as the ladies of Glenfern? As Madame de Stael, or de Something says, "they fulfilled their destinies." Their walk lay amongst threads and and pickles; their sphere extended from the garret to the pantry; and often, as they sought to diverge from it their instinct always led them to return to it, as the track in which they were destined to move. There are creatures of the same sort in the male part of the creation, but it is foreign to my purpose to describe them at present. Neither are the trifling and insignificant of either sex to be treated with contempt, or looked upon as useless by those whom God has gifted with higher powers. In the arrangements of an all-wise Providence, there is nothing created in vain. Every link of the vast chain that embraces creation helps to hold together the various relations of life; and all is beautiful gradation, from the human vegetable to the glorious archangel.

If patient hope, if unexulting joy, and chastened anticipation, sanctifying a mother's love, could have secured her happiness, Mrs. Douglas would have found in the smiles of her infant, all the comfort her virtue deserved. But she still had to drink of that cup of sweet and bitter, which must bathe the lips of all who breathe the breath of life.

While the instinct of a parent's love warmed her heart, as she pressed her infant to her bosom, the sadness of affectionate and rational solicitude stifled every sentiment of pleasure, as she gazed on the altered and drooping form of her adopted daughter —of the child who had already repaid the cares that had been lavished on her, and in whom she descried the promise of a plenteous harvest from the good seed she had sown. Though Mary had been healthy in childhood, her constitution was naturally delicate

and she had latterly outgrown her strength. The shock she had sustained by her grand-fathers death thus operating on a weakened frame, had produced an effect apparently most alarming; and the efforts she made to exert herself, only served to exhaust her. She felt all the watchful solicitude, the tender anxieties of her aunt, and bitterly reproached herself with not better repaying these exertions for her happiness. A thousand times she tried to analyse and extirpate the saddening impression that weighed upon her heart.

"It is not sorrow," reasoned she with herself, that thus oppresses me: for though I reverenced my grand-father, yet the loss of his society has scarcely been felt by me. It cannot be fear—the fear of death; for my soul is not so abject as to confine its desires to this sublunary scene. What then is this mysterious dread that has taken possession of me? Why do I suffer my mind to suggest to me images of horror, instead of visions of bliss? Why can I not, as formerly, picture to myself the beauty and brightness of a soul casting off mortality? Why must the convulsed grasp, the stifled groan, the glaring eye, forever come betwixt heaven and me?"

Alas! Mary was unskilled to answer. Her's was the season for feeling, not for reasoning. She knew not that her's was the struggle of imagination striving to maintain its ascendancy over reality. She had heard, read, thought, and talked of death; but it was of death in its fairest form—in its softest transition: and the veil had been abruptly torn from her eyes; the gloomy pass had suddenly disclosed itself before her, not strewed with flowers, but shrouded in horrors. Like all persons of sensibility, Mary had a disposition to view every thing in a *beau-ideal:* whether that is a boon most fraught with good or ill, it were difficult to ascertain. While the delusion lasts, it is productive of pleasure to its possessor; but, oh! the thousand aches that heart

to destroy to endure, which clings to life [illegible] and relies on the permanency of earthly happiness! But the youthful heart must ever remain a stranger to this saddening truth. Experience only can convince us, that happiness is not a plant of this world; and that, though many an eye hath beheld its blossoms, no mortal hand hath ever gathered its fruit. This, then, was Mary's first lesson in what is called the knowledge of life, as opposed to the [illegible] ideal of a young and ardent imagination, in love with life, and luxuriating in its own happiness. And upon such a mind, it could not fail of producing a powerful impression.

The anguish Mrs. Douglas experienced, as she witnessed the changing colour, lifeless step, and forced smile of her darling child, was not mitigated by the good sense or sympathy of those around her. While Mary had prospered under her management in the consciousness that she was fulfilling her duty to the best of her abilities, she could listen, with placid cheerfulness, to the broken hints of disapprobation, or forced good wishes for the success of her new-fangled schemes, that were levelled at her by the sisters. But now, when her cares seemed defeated, it was an additional thorn in her heart to have to endure the common-place wisdom, and self-gratulations of the almost exulting aunts: not that they had the slightest intention of wounding the feelings of their niece, whom they really loved, but the temptation was irresistible of proving that they had been in the right, and she in the wrong, especially as no such acknowledgment had yet been extorted from her.

"It is nonsense to ascribe Mary's dwining to her grand-father's death," said Miss Jacky. "We were all nearer to him in propinquity than she was and none of our healths have suffered."

"And there's his own daughters," added Miss Grizzy, "who, of course, must have felt a great

deal more than any body else—there can be no doubt of that—Such sensible creatures as them must feel a great deal; but yet you see how they have got up their spirits—I'm sure it's wonderful!"

"It shows their sense, and the effects of education," said Miss Jacky.

"Girls that sup their porridge, will always cut a good figure," quoth Nicky.

"With their fine feelings, I'm sure, we have all reason to be thankful that they have been blest with such hearty stomachs," observed Miss Grizzy; "if they had been delicate like poor Mary's, I'm sure, I declare, I don't know what we would have done; for certainly they were all most dreadfully affected at their excellent father's death; which was quite natural, poor things! I'm sure there's no pacifying Babby, and even yet, neither Bella nor Betsy can bear to be left alone in a dark room. Tibby has to sleep with them still every night; and a lighted candle too—which is much to their credit—and yet I'm sure its not with reading. I'm certain indeed, I think there's no doubt of it—that reading does young people much harm. It puts things into their heads that never would have been there, but for books. I declare, I think, reading's a very dangerous thing. I'm certain all Mary's bad health is entirely owing to reading. You know, we always thought she read a great deal too much for her good."

"Much depends upon the choice of books," said Jacky, with an air of the most profound wisdom. "Fordyce's Sermons, and the History of Scotland, are two of the very few books I would put into the hands of a young woman. Our girls have read little else,"—casting a look at Mrs. Douglas, who was calmly pursuing her work in the midst of this shower of darts all levelled at her.

"To be sure," returned Grizzy, "it is a thousand pities that Mary had been allowed to go on so long;

not, I'm sure, that any of us mean to reflect upon you, my dear Mrs. Douglas; for of course it was all owing to your ignorance and inexperience; and that, you know, you could not help; for it was not your fault; nobody can blame you, I'm certain you would have done what is right, if you had only known better; but of course, we must all know much better than you; because, you know, we are all a great deal older, and especially Lady Maclaughlan, who has had the greatest experience in the diseases of old men especially, and infants. Indeed it has been the study of her life almost; for, you know, poor Sir Sampson is never well; and I dare say, if Mary had taken some of her nice worm lozenges, which certainly cured Duncan M'Nab's wife's daughter's little girl of the jaundice, and used that valuable growing embrocation, which we are all sensible made Babby a great deal fatter, I dare say there would have been nothing the matter with her to day."

"Mary has been too much accustomed to spend both her time and money amongst idle vagrants," said Nicky.

"Economy of both," subjoined Jacky, with an air of humility, "I confess I have ever been accustomed to consider as virtues. These handsome respectable new bonnets," looking *from* Mrs. Douglas. "that our girls got just before their poor father's death, were entirely the fruits of their own savings."

"And I declare," said Grizzy, who did not excel in inuendos; "I declare, for my part—although at the same time, my dear niece, I'm certain you are far from intending it—I really think it's very disrespectful to Sir Sampson and Lady Maclaughlan in any body, and especially such near neighbours, to give more in charity than they do; for, you may be sure, they give as much as they think proper, and they must be the best judges, and can afford to

give what they please; for Sir Sampson could buy and sell all of us a hundred times over, if he liked. It's long since the Lockmarlie estate was called seven thousand a year; and, besides that, there's the Birkendale property, and the Glenmavis estate; and, I'm sure, I can't tell you all what; but there's no doubt he's a man of immense fortune."

Well it was known, and frequently was it discussed, the iniquity of Mary being allowed to waste her time, and squander her money amongst the poor instead of being taught the practical virtues of making her own gowns, and of hoarding up her pocket-money for some selfish gratification.

In colloquies such as these, day after day passed on without any visible improvement taking place in her health. Only one remedy suggested itself to Mrs. Douglas, and that was to remove her to the South of England for the winter. Milder air, and change of scene, she had no doubt would prove efficacious; and her opinion was confirmed by that of the celebrated Dr ———, who having been summoned to the Laird of Pettlechass, had paid a visit at Glenfern *en passant*. How so desirable an event was to be accomplished, was the difficulty. By the death of his father, a variety of business and an extent of farming had devolved upon Mr. Douglas, which obliged him to fix his residence at Glenfern, and rendered it impossible for him to be long absent from it. Mrs. Douglas had engaged in the duties of a nurse to her little boy, and to take him, or leave him, was equally out of the question.

In this dilemma, the only resource that offered, was that of sending Mary for a few months to her mother. True, it was a painful necessity; for Mrs. Douglas seldom heard from her sister-in-law, and when she did, her letters were short and cold. She sometimes desired a "kiss to her (Mrs. Douglas') little girl," and once in an extraordinary fit of good humour, had actually sent a locket with her

hair in a letter by post, for which Mrs. Douglas had to pay something more than the value of the present. This was all that Mary knew of her mother, and the rest of her family were still greater strangers to her. Her father remained in a distant station in India, and was seldom heard of. Her brother was gone to sea; and though she had written repeatedly to her sister, her letters remained unnoticed. Under these circumstances, there was something revolting in the idea of obtruding Mary upon the notice of her relations, and trusting to their kindness even for a few months: yet her health, perhaps her life, was at stake, and Mrs. Douglas felt she had scarcely a right to hesitate.

"Mary has perhaps been too long an alien from her own family," said she to herself; "this will be a means of her becoming acquainted with them, and of introducing her to that sphere in which she is probably destined to walk. Under her uncle's roof she will surely be safe, and in the society of her mother and sister she cannot be unhappy. New scenes will give a stimulus to her mind; the necessity of exertion will brace the languid faculties of her soul, and a few short months, I trust, will restore her to me such, and even superior to what she was. Why then should I hesitate to do what my conscience tells me ought not to be done? Alas! it is because I selfishly shrink from the pain of separation, am unwilling to relinquish, even for a season, one of the many blessings heaven has bestowed upon me." And Mrs. Douglas, noble and disinterested as ever rose superior to the weakness that she felt was besetting her. Mary listened to her communication with a throbbing heart, and eyes suffused with tears; to part from her aunt was agony, but to behold her mother—she to whom she owed her existence—to embrace a sister too—and one for whom she felt all those mysterious yearnings which twins are said to entertain towards each other

—O, there was rapture in the thought, and Mary's buoyant heart fluctuated between the extremes of anguish and delight.

The venerable sisters received the intelligence with much surprise: they did not know very well what to say about it; there was much to be said both for and against it. Lady Maclaughlan had a high opinion of English air; but then they had heard the morals of the people were not so good, and there were a great many dissipated young men in England; though, to be sure, there was no denying but the mineral waters were excellent; and, in short, it ended in Miss Grizzy's sitting down to concoct an epistle to Lady Maclaughlan; in Miss Jacky's beginning to draw up a code of instructions for a young woman upon her entrance into life; and Miss Nicky hoping that if Mary did go she would take care not to bring back any extravagant English notions with her. The younger set debated among themselves how many of them would be invited to accompany Mary to England, and from thence fell to disputing the possession of a brown hair trunk, with a flourished D, in brass letters, on the top.

Mrs. Douglas, with repressed feelings, set about offering the sacrifice she had planned, and in a letter to Lady Juliana, descriptive of her daughter's situation, she sought to excite her tenderness without creating an alarm. How far she succeeded, will be seen hereafter. In the meantime we must take a retrospective glance at the last seventeen years of her Ladyship's life.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Her "only labour was to still the time;
And labour dire it is, and weary wo."
Castle of Indolence.

YEARS had rolled on, amidst heartless pleasures and joyless amusements, but Lady Juliana was made neither the wiser nor the better, by added years and increased experience. Time had in vain turned his glass before eyes still dazzled with the gaudy allurements of the world, for she took "no note of time," but as the thing that was to take her to the Opera and the Park, and that sometimes hurried her excessively, and sometimes bored her to death. At length she was compelled to abandon her chase after happiness, in the only sphere where she believed it was to be found. Lord Courtland's declining health unfitted him for the dissipation of a London life; and, by the advice of his physician, he resolved upon retiring to a country seat, which he possessed in the vicinity of Bath. Lady Juliana was in despair at the thoughts of this sudden wrench from what she termed life; but she had no resource for though her good-natured husband gave her the whole of General Cameron's allowance, that scarcely served to keep her in clothes; and though her brother was perfectly willing, that she and her children should occupy apartments in his house, yet he would have been equally acquiescent, had she proposed to remove from it. Lady Juliana had a sort

of instinctive knowledge of this, which prevented her from breaking out into open remonstrance. She therefore contented herself with being more than usually peevish and irascible to her servants and children; and talking to her friends of the prodigious sacrifice she was about to make for her brother and his family, as if it had been the cutting off of a hand, or the plucking out of an eye. To have heard her, any one unaccustomed to the hyperbole of fashionable language, would have deemed Botany Bay the nearest possible point of destination. Parting from her fashionable acquaintances, was tearing herself from all she loved—quitting London was bidding adieu to the world. Of course there could be no society where she was going, but still she would do her duty—she would not desert dear Frederick, and his dear children! In short no martyr was ever led to the stake, with half the notions of heroism and self-devotion, as those with which Lady Juliana stepped into the barouche that was to conduct her to Beech Park. In the society of piping bulfinches, pink canaries, grey parrots, gold fish, green squirrels, Italian greyhounds, and French poodles, she sought a refuge from despair. But even these varied charms, after a while, failed to please: The bulfinches grew hoarse—the canaries turned brown—the parrots became stupid—the gold fish would not eat—the squirrels were cross—the dogs fought; even a shell grotto that was constructing, fell down; and, by the time the aviary and conservatory were filled, they had lost their interest. The children were the next subjects for her Ladyship's *ennui* to discharge itself upon. Lord Courtland had a son, some years older, and a daughter nearly of the same age as her own. It suddenly occurred to her, that they must be educated and that she would educate the girls herself. As the first step, she engaged two governesses, French and Italian; modern treatises on the subject of ed-

ucation were ordered from London—looked at, admired, and arranged on gilded shelves, and sofa tables: and could their contents have exhaled with the odours of their Russia leather bindings, Lady Juliana's dressing-room would have been, what Sir Joshua Reynolds says every seminary of learning is, "an atmosphere of floating knowledge." But amidst this splendid display of human lore, THE BOOK found no place. She *had* heard of the Bible, however, and even knew it was a book appointed to be read in churches, and given to poor people, along with Rumford soup, and flannel shirts: but as the rule of life—as the book that alone could make wise unto salvation, this Christian parent was ignorant as the Hottentot or Hindoo.

Three days beheld the rise, progress, and decline of Lady Juliana's whole system of education: and it would have been well for the children, had the trust been delegated to those better qualified to discharge it. But neither of the preceptresses were better skilled in the only true knowledge. Signora Cipiada was a bigoted Catholic, whose faith hung upon her beads, and Madam Grignon was an *esprit fort*, who had no faith in any thing but *le plaisir*. But the Signora's singing was heavenly, and Madame's dancing was divine, and what lacked there more?

So passed the first years of beings training for immortality. The children insensibly ceased to be children, and Lady Juliana would have beheld the increasing height and beauty of her daughter with extreme disapprobation had not that beauty by awakening her ambition, also excited her affection, if the term affection could be applied to that heterogeneous mass of feelings and propensities that [illegible] had none distinguishable." Lady Juliana [illegible] fallen into an error, very common with wiser [illegible] than hers,—that of mistaking the *effect* for the [illegible] she looked no further than to her union with

Henry Douglas for the foundation of all her unhappiness—it never once occurred to her, that her marriage was only the *consequence* of something previously wrong; she saw not the head-strong passions that had impelled her to please herself—no matter at what price. She thought not of the want of principle—she blushed not at the want of delicacy, that had led her to deceive a parent, and to elope with a man to whose character she was a total stranger. She therefore considered herself as having fallen a victim to love; and could she only save her daughter from a similar error, she might yet by her means retrieve her fallen fortune. To implant principles of religion and virtue in her mind, was not within the compass of her own; but she could scoff at every pure and generous affection—she could ridicule every disinterested attachment—and she could expatiate on the never-fading joys that attend on wealth and titles, jewels and equipages—and all this she did in the belief that she was acting the part of a most wise and tender parent! The seed thus carefully sown, promised to bring forth an abundant harvest. At eighteen Adelaide Douglas was as heartless and ambitious as she was beautiful and accomplished—but the surface was covered with flowers and who would have thought of analysing the soil?

It sometimes happens, that the very means used, with success, in the formation of one character, produce a totally opposite effect upon another. The mind of Lady Emily Lindore had undergone exactly the same process in its formation as that of her cousin; yet in all things they differed. Whether it were the independence of high birth, or the pride of a mind conscious of its own powers, she had hitherto resisted the sophistry of her governesses, and the solecisms of her aunt. But her notions of right and wrong were too crude to influence the general tenor of her life, or operate as restraints

upon a naturally high spirit, and impetuous temper. But all the united efforts of her preceptresses had been able to form a manner for their pupil: nor could their authority restrain her from saying what she thought, and doing what she pleased; and, in spite of both precept and example, Lady Emily remained, as inseparably natural and sincere, as she was beautiful and piquante. At six years old she had declared her intention of marrying her cousin Edward Douglas; and, at eighteen, her words were little less equivocal. Lord Courtland, who never disturbed himself about any thing was rather diverted with this juvenile attachment; and Lady Juliana, who cared little for her own, and still less for her niece, only wondered how people could be such fools as to think of marrying for love, after she had told them how miserable it would make them.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"Unthought of frailties cheat us in the wise;
The fool lies hid in inconsistencies."

POPE.

SUCH were the female members of the family to whom Mary was about to be introduced. In her mother's heart she had no place, for of her absent husband and neglected daughter she seldom thought; and their letters were scarcely read, and rarely answered. Even good Miss Grizzy's elaborate epistle, in which were curiously entwined the death of her brother, and the birth and christening of her grand nephew, in a truly Gordian manner, remained disentangled. Had her Ladyship only read to the middle of the seventh page, she would have learned the indisposition of her daughter, with the various opinions thereupon; but poor Miss Grizzy's labours were vain, for her letter remains a dead letter to this day. Mrs. Douglas was therefore the first to convey the unwelcome intelligence, and to suggest to the mind of the mother, that her alienated daughter still retained some claims upon her care and affection; and, although this was done with all the tenderness and delicacy of a gentle and enlightened mind, it called forth the most bitter indignation from Lady Juliana.

She almost raved at what she termed the base ingratitude and hypocrisy of her sister-in-law. After the sacrifice she had made in giving up her child

... when she had none of her own, it was ... to send her back only to die. But ... She did not believe a word ... that was all a trick to get rid of ... had a child of their own, they had ... she was not to be made a fool of ... and by such people. &c. &c.

"If Mrs Douglas is so vile a woman," said ... Lady Emily, "the sooner my cousin ... the better."

"You don't understand these things, Emily," ... impatiently.

"What things?"

"The trouble and annoyance it will occasion me, ... charge of the girl at this time."

"Why at this time more than at any other?"

"... my dear! how can you ask so foolish a ... Don't you know that you and Adelaide ... to bring out this winter, and how can I ... do you justice, with a dying girl upon ..."

"... you suspected it was all a trick," ... the persecuting Lady Emily.

"... I haven't the least doubt of it. The ... is the most improbable stuff I ever ..."

"... you will have less trouble than you expect."

"... I have to be made a dupe of, and imposed upon ... cunning. If Mrs. Douglas had told me candidly she wished me to take the girl, I would have thought nothing of it; but I can't bear to be treated like a fool."

"I don't see any thing at all unbecoming in Mrs. Douglas' treatment."

"Then what can I do with a girl who has been educated in Scotland? She must be vulgar—all Scotchwomen are so. They have red hands, and rough voices; they yawn, and blow their noses,

and talk, and laugh loud, and do a thousand shocking things. Then to hear the Scotch brogue—oh, heavens! I should expire every time she opened her mouth!"

"Perhaps my sister may not speak so *very* broad," kindly suggested Adelaide in her sweetest accents.

"You are very good, my love, to think so; but nobody can live in that odious country without being infected with its *patois*. I really thought I should have caught it myself; and Mr. Douglas (no longer Henry) became quite gross in his language, after living amongst his relations."

"This is really too bad," cried Lady Emily indignantly. "If a person speaks sense and truth, what does it signify how it is spoken? And whether your Ladyship chooses to receive your daughter here or not, I shall, at any rate, invite my cousin to my father's house." And, snatching up a pen, she instantly began a letter to Mary.

Lady Juliana was highly incensed at this freedom of her niece; but she was a little afraid of her, and therefore after some sharp altercation, and with infinite violence done to her feelings, she was prevailed upon to write a decently civil sort of a letter to Mrs. Douglas, consenting to receive her daughter for a *few months;* firmly resolving in her own mind to conceal her from all eyes and ears while she remained, and to return her to her Scotch relations early in the summer.

This worthy resolution formed, she became more serene, and awaited the arrival of her daughter with as much firmness as could reasonably have been expected.

CHAPTER XXIX.

"And for unfelt imaginations
They often feel a world of restless cares."
SHAKESPEARE.

LITTLE weened the good ladies of Glenfern the ungracious reception their *protege* was likely to experience from her mother; for, in spite of the defects of her education, Mary was a general favourite in the family: and however they might solace themselves by depreciating her to Mrs. Douglas, to the world in general, and their young female acquaintances in particular, she was upheld as an epitome of every perfection above and below the sun. Had it been possible for them to conceive that Mary could have been received with any thing short of rapture, Lady Juliana's letter might, in some measure, have opened the eyes of their understanding: but to the guileless sisters, it seemed every thing that was proper. Sorry for the necessity Mrs. Douglas felt under of parting with her adopted daughter—was "prettily expressed"—had no doubt it was merely a slight nervous affection, "was kind and soothing;" and the assurance, more than once repeated, that her friends might rely upon her being returned to them in the course of a very few months, "showed a great deal of feeling and consideration." But as their minds never maintained a just equilibrium long upon any subject, but, like falsely adjusted scales, were ever hovering

and vibrating at either extreme—so they could not rest satisfied in the belief that Mary was to be happy—there must be something to counteract that stilling sentiment; and that was the apprehension that Mary would be spoilt. This, for the present was the pendulum of their imaginations.

"I declare, Mary, my sisters and I could get no sleep last night for thinking of you," said Miss Grizzy; "we are all certain that Lady Juliana especially, but indeed all your English relations, will think so much of you—from not knowing you, you know—which will be quite natural. I'm sure that my sisters and I have taken it into our heads; but I hope it won't be the case, as you have a great deal of good sense of your own—that they will quite turn your head."

"Mary's head is on her shoulders to little purpose," followed up Miss Jacky, "if she can't stand being made of when she goes amongst strangers; and she ought to know by this time, that a mother's partiality is no proof of a child's merit."

"You hear that Mary," rejoined Miss Grizzy: "So I'm sure I hope you won't mind a word that your mother says to you. I mean about yourself; for, of course, you know she can't be such a good judge of you as us, who have known you all your life. As to other things, I dare say she is well informed about the country, and politics, and these sort of things—I'm certain Lady Juliana knows a great deal."

"And I hope, Mary, you will take care and not get into the the daadlin' handless ways of the English women," said Miss Nicky; "I wouldn't give a pin for an Englishwoman."

"And I hope you will never look at an Englishman, Mary," said Miss Grizzy, with equal earnestness; "take my word for it, they are a very dissipated unprincipled set. They all drink, and game, and keep race-horses; and many of them,

I'm told, even keep play-actresses.—So you may think what it would be for all of us, if you was to marry any of them,"—and tears streamed from the good spinster's eyes, at the bare supposition of such a calamity.

"Don't be afraid, my dear aunt," said Mary with a kind caress, "I shall come back to you your own 'Highland Mary.' No Englishman with his round face and trim meadows shall captivate me. Heath-covered hills, and high cheek bones, are the charms that must win my heart."

"I'm delighted to hear you say so, my dear Mary," said the literal minded Grizzy: "Certainly nothing can be prettier than the heather when it's in flower; and there is something very manly—nobody can dispute that—in high cheek bones: and besides, to tell you a secret, Lady Maclaughlan has a husband in her eye for you—We, none of us, can conceive who it is, but, of course, he must be suitable in every respect; for you know Lady Maclaughlan has had three husbands herself, so, of course, she must be an excellent judge of a good husband."

"Or a bad one," said Mary, "which is the same thing. Warning is as good as example."

Mrs. Douglas' ideas and those of her aunts did not coincide upon this occasion more than most others. In her sister-in-law's letter, she flattered herself she saw only fashionable indifference, and she fondly hoped that would soon give way to a tenderer sentiment, as her daughter became known to her. At any rate, it was proper that Mary should make the trial, and which ever way it ended, it must be for her advantage.

"Mary has already lived too long in these mountain solitudes," thought she; "her ideas will become romantic, and her taste fastidious. If it is dangerous to be too early initiated into the ways of the world, it is perhaps equally so to live too long

secluded from it. Should she make herself a place in the heart of her mother and sister, it will be so much happiness gained; and should it prove otherwise, it will be a lesson learnt—a hard one indeed! but hard are the lessons we must learn in the school of life!" Yet Mrs. Douglas' fortitude almost failed her, as the period of seperation approached.

It had been arranged by Lady Emily, that a carriage and servants should meet Mary at Edinburgh, whither Mr. Douglas was to convey her. The cruel moment came; and mother, sister, relations, friends, all the bright visions which Mary's sanguine spirit had conjured up to soften the parting pang, all were absorbed in one agonizing feeling—one overwhelming thought. O, who that for the first time has parted from the parent, whose tenderness and love were entwined with our earliest recollections, whose sympathy had soothed our infant sufferings, whose fondness had brightened our infant felicity;—who that has a heart, but must have felt it sink beneath the anguish of a first farewell! Yet bitterer still must be the feelings of the parent upon committing the cherished object of their cares and affections to the stormy ocean of life. When experience points to the gathering cloud and rising surge which soon may assail their defenceless child, what can support the mother's heart, but trust in Him, whose eye slumbereth not, and whose power extendeth over all! It was this pious hope, this holy confidence, that enabled this more than mother to part from her adopted child with a resignation which no earthly motive could have imparted to her mind. It seems almost profanation to mingle with her elevated feelings, the coarse, yet simple sorrows of the aunts, old and young, as they clung around the nearly lifeless Mary, each tendering the parting gift they had kept as a solace for the last.

Poor Miss Grizzy was more than usually incoherent, as she displayed "a nice new umberella that

could be turned into a walking-stick, or any thing," and a dressing-box with a little of every thing in it; and with a fresh burst of tears. Mary was directed where she would not find eye-ointment, and where she was not to look for stinking plaister.

Miss Jacky was more composed, as she presented a flaming copy of Purdyre's Sermons to Young Women, with a few suitable observations; but Miss Nicky could scarcely find voice to tell that the house-wife she now tendered had once been Lady Girnachgowl's, and that it contained White-chapel needles of every size and number. The younger ladies had clubbed for the purchase of a large locket, in which was enshrined a lock from each subscriber, tastefully arranged by the ——jeweller, in the form of a wheat sheaf, upon a blue ground. Even Old Donald had his offering, as he stood tottering at the chaise door, he contrived to get a "bit smishin mull" laid on Mary's lap, with a "God bless her bonny face, an' may she ne'er want a good sneesh!"

The carriage drove off, and for a while Mary's eyes were closed in despair.

CHAPTER XXX.

"Farewell to the mountains, high covered with snow;
Farewell to the straths, and green valleys below;
Farewell to the forests, and wild hanging woods,
Farewell to the torrents, and loud roaring floods!"

SCOTCH SONG.

HAPPILY in the moral world, as in the material one, the warring elements have their prescribed bounds, and the flood of grief decreaseth, when it can swell no higher;" but it is only by retrospection we can bring ourselves to believe in this obvious truth. The young and untried heart hugs itself in the bitterness of its emotions, and takes a pride in believing, that its anguish can end but with its existence; and it is not till time hath steeped our senses in forgetfulness, that we discover the mutability of all human passions.

But Mary left it not to the slow hand of time to subdue in some measure the grief that swelled her heart. Had she given way to selfishness, she would have sought the free indulgence of her sorrow as the only mitigation of it; but she felt also for her uncle. He was depressed at parting with his wife and child, and he was taking a long and dreary journey entirely upon her account. Could she therefore be so selfish as to add to his uneasiness by a display of her sufferings? No—she would strive to conceal it from his observation, though to overcome it was impossible. Her feelings must ever remain the same, but she would confine them to her own breast; and she

began to converse with, and even strove to amuse her kind-hearted companion. Ever and anon, indeed, a rush of tender recollections came across her mind, and the soft voice, and the bland countenance of her maternal friend, seemed for a moment present to her senses; and then the dreariness and desolation that succeeded as the delusion vanished, and all was stillness and vacuity! Even self-reproach shot its piercing sting into her ingenious heart; levities on which, in her usual gayety of spirit, she had never bestowed a thought, now appeared to her as crimes of the deepest dye. She thought how often she had slighted counsels and neglected the wishes of her good monitress; how she had wearied of her good old aunts, their cracked voices, and their everlasting *tic-a-tic* of their knitting needles; how coarse and vulgar she had sometimes deemed the younger ones; how she had mimicked Lady Maclaughlan, and caricatured Sir Sampson, and "even poor dear old Donald," said she, as she summed up the catalogue of her crimes, could not escape my insolence and ill nature. How clever I thought it to sing 'Haud awa frae me, Donald,' and how affectedly I shuddered at every thing he touched;" and the "snishin mull" was bedewed with tears of affectionate contrition. But, every painful sentiment was for a while suspended in admiration of the magnificent scenery that was spread around them. Though summer had fled, and few even of autmn's graces remained, yet over the august features of mountain scenery the seasons have little control. Their charms depend not upon richness of verdure, or luxuriance of foliage, or any of the mere prettinesses of nature; but whether wrapped in snow, or veiled in mist, or glowing in sunshine, their lonely grandeur remains the same; and the same feelings fill and elevate the soul in contemplating these mighty works of an Almighty hand. The eye is never weary in watching the thousand varieties of the light

and shade, as they flit over the mountain, and gleam upon the lake; and the ear is satisfied with the awful stillness of her nature in her solicitude.

Others besides Mary seemed to have taken a fanciful pleasure in combining the ideas of the mental and elemental world, for in the dreary dwelling where they were destined to pass the night, she found inscribed the following lines:—

"The busy winds war mid the waving boughs,
And darkly rolls the heaving surge to land;
Among the flying clouds the moon-beam glows
With colours foreign to its softness bland.

Here, one dark shadow melts, in gloom profound,
The towering Alps—the guardians of the Lake;
There, one bright gleam sheds silver light around,
And shows the threat'ning strife that tempests wake.

Thus o'er my mind a busy memory plays,
That shakes the feelings to their inmost core;
Thus beams the light of hope's fallacious rays,
When simple confidence can trust no more.

So one dark shadow shrouds each by-gone hour,
So one bright gleam the coming tempest shows;
That tells of sorrows, which, though past, still lower,
And *this* reveals th' approach of future woes."

While Mary was trying to decypher these somewhat mystic lines, her uncle was carrying on a colloquy in Gaelic with their hostess. The consequences of the consultation were not of the choicest description, consisting of braxy* mutton, raw potatoes, wet bannocks, hard cheese, and whisky. Very differently would the travellers have fared, had the good Nicky's intentions been fulfilled. She had prepared with her own hands a moorfowl-pye and potted nowt's head, besides a profusion of what she termed "trifles, just for Mary, poor thing! to divert herself with upon the road." But alas! in

* Sheep that have died a natural death, and been salted.

the anguish of separation, the covered basket had been forgot, and the labour of Miss Nicky's hands fell to be consumed by the family, though Miss Grizzy protested with tears in her eyes, "that it went to her heart like a knife, to eat poor Mary's puffs and snaps."

Change of air, and variety of scene, failed not to produce the happiest effects upon Mary's languid frame and drooping spirits. Her cheek already glowed with health, and was sometimes dimpled with smiles. She still wept indeed as she thought of those she had left: but often while the tear trembled in her eye, its course was arrested by wonder, or admiration, or delight: for every object had its charms for her. Her cultivated taste and unsophisticated mind could descry beauty in the form of a hill, and grandeur in the form of the wave, and elegance in the weeping birch, as it dipped its new almost leafless boughs in the mountain stream. These simple pleasures unknown alike to the sordid mind and vitiated taste, are ever exquisitely enjoyed by the refined, yet unsophisticated child of nature.

CHAPTER XXXI.

"Her native sense improved by reading,
Her native sweetness by good breeding."

During their progress through the Highlands, the travellers were hospitably entertained at the mansions of the country gentlemen, where old fashioned courtesy, and modern comfort, combined to cheer the stranger guest. But upon *coming out*, as it is significantly expressed by the natives of these mountain regions, viz. entering the low country, they found they had only made a change of difficulties. In the Highlands they were always sure, that wherever there was a house, that house would be to them a home; but on a fair-day in the little town of G. they found themselves in the midst of houses, and surrounded by people, yet unable to procure rest or shelter.

At the only inn the place afforded they were informed, "'The horses were baith oot, an' the ludgin' a' tane up, an' mair tu;" while the driver asserted, what indeed was apparent, "that his beasts war nae fit to gang the length o' their tae farrer—no for the king himsel'."

At this moment, a stout, florid, good-humoured looking man passed whistling "Roy's Wife" with all his heart; and just as Mr. Douglas was stepping out of the carriage to try what could be done, the same person evidently attracted by curiosity, re-

passed, changing his tune to "There's cauld kail in Aberdeen."

He started at sight of Mr. Douglas; then eagerly grasping his hand. "Ah, Archie Douglas, is this you?" exclaimed he with a loud laugh, and hearty shake. "What! you havn't forgot your old schoolfellow Bob Gawffaw?"

A mutual recognition now took place, and much pleasure was manifested on both sides at this unexpected rencontre. No time was allowed to explain their embarrassments, for Mr. Gawffaw had already tipped the post-boy the wink, (which he seemed easily to comprehend;) and forcing Mr. Douglas to resume his seat in the carriage, he jumped in himself.

"Now for Howffend and Mrs. Gawffaw! ha! ha! ha! This will be a surprise upon her. She thinks I'm in my barn all this time—ha, ha, ha!

Mr. Douglas here began to express his astonishment at his friends precipitation, and his apprehensions as to the trouble they might occasion Mrs. Gawffaw; but bursts of laughter and broken expressions of delight were the only replies he could procure from his friend.

After jolting over half a mile of very bad road, the carriage stopped at a mean, vulgar-looking mansion, with dirty windows, ruinous thatched offices, and broken fences.

Such was the picture of still life. That of animated nature was not less picturesque. Cows bellowed, and cart horses neighed, and pigs grunted, and geese gabbled, and ducks quacked, and cocks and hens flapped and fluttered promiscuously, as they mingled in a sort of yard, divided from the house by a low dyke, possessing the accommodation of a crazy gate, which was bestrode by a parcel of bare-legged boys.

"What are you about, you confounded rascals?" called Mr. Gawffaw to them.

"Naething," answered one.

"We're just takin' a heize on the yett," answered another.

"I'll heize ye, ye scoundrels!" exclaimed the incensed Mr. Gawffaw, as he burst from the carriage; and, snatching the driver's whip from his hand, flew after the more nimble-footed culprits.

Finding his efforts to overtake them in vain, he returned to the door of his mansion, where stood his guests, waiting to be ushered in. He opened the door himself, and led the way to a parlour, which was quite of a piece with the exterior of the dwelling. A dim dusty table stood in the middle of the floor, heaped with a variety of heterogeneous articles of dress; an exceeding dirty volume of a novel lay open amongst them. The floor was littered with shapings of flannel, and shreds of gauzes, ribbons, &c. &c. The fire was almost out, and the hearth was covered with ashes.

After insisting upon his guests being seated, Mr. Gawffaw walked to the door of the apartment, and hallowed out, "Mrs. Gawffaw—ho! May, my dear!—I say, Mrs. Gawffaw!"

A low, croaking, querulous voice was now heard in reply, "For heavens sake Mr. Gawffaw, make less noise! For God's sake have mercy on the walls of your house, if you've none on my poor head!" And thereupon entered Mrs. Gawffaw, a cap in one hand, which she appeared to have been tying on—a smelling-bottle in the other.

She possessed a considerable share of insipid, and somewhat faded beauty, but disguised by a tawdry trumpery style of dress, and rendered almost disgusting by the air of affectation, folly, and peevishness, that overspread her whole person and deportment. She testified the utmost surprise and coldness at the sight of her guests; and, as she entered, Mr. Gawffaw rushed out, having descried something passing in the yard that called for his

intercession. Mr. Douglas was therefore under the necessity of introducing himself and Mary to their ungracious hostess; briefly stating the circumstances that had led them to be her guests, and dwelling, with much warmth, on the kindness and hospitality of her husband in having relieved them from their embarrassment. A gracious smile, or what was intended as such, beamed over Mrs. Gawffaw's face at first mention of their names.

"Excuse me, Mr. Douglas," said she making a profound reverence to him, and another to Mary, waving her hand for them to be seated. "Excuse me, Miss Douglas; but, situated as I am, I find it necessary to be very distant to Mr. Gawffaw's friends sometimes. He is a thoughtless man, Mr. Douglas, a very thoughtless man. He makes a perfect inn of his house. He never lies out of the town, trying who he can pick up and bring home with him. It is seldom I am so fortunate as to see such guests as Mr. and Miss Douglas of Glenfern Castle in my house," (with an elegant bow to each, which of course, was duly returned.) "But Mr. Gawffaw would have shown more consideration, both for you and me, had he apprised me of the honour of your visit, instead of bringing you here in this ill-bred, unceremonious manner. As for me, I am too well accustomed to him to be hurt at these things now. He has kept me in hot water, I may say, since the day I married him."

In spite of the conciliatory manner in which this gracious address was made, Mr. Douglas felt considerably disconcerted, and again renewed his apologies, adding something about hopes of being able [illegible]

"Make no apologies, my dear sir," said the lady, in what she deemed a most bewitching manner; "it affords me the greatest pleasure to see any of your family under my roof. I meant no reflection on you; it is entirely Mr. Gawffaw that is to

blame, in not having apprised me of the honour of this visit, that I might not have been caught in this *deshabille;* but I was really so engaged by my studies," pointing to the dirty Novel, "that I was quite unconscious of the lapse of time." The guests felt more and more at a loss what to say. But the lady was at none. Seeing Mr. Douglas still standing with his hat in his hand, and his eye directed towards the door, she resumed her discourse.

"Pray be seated, Mr. Douglas—I beg you will sit off the door. Miss Douglas I entreat you will walk into the fire—I hope you will consider yourself as quite at home"—another elegant bend to each. "I only regret that Mr. Gawffaw's folly and ill breeding should have brought you into this disagreeable situation, Mr. Douglas. He is a well meaning man, Mr. Douglas, and a good hearted man; but he is very deficient in other respects, Mr. Douglas,"

Mr. Douglas happy to find any thing to which he could assent, warmly joined in the eulogium on the excellence of his friend's heart. It did not appear, however, to give the satisfaction he expected. The lady resumed with a sigh, "Nobody can know Mr. Gawffaw's heart better than I do, Mr. Douglas. It *is* a good one, but it is far from being an elegant one; it is one in which I find no congeniality of sentiment with my own. Indeed, Mr. Gawffaw is no companion for me, nor I for him, Mr. Douglas—he is never happy in my society, and I really believe he would rather sit down with the tinklers on the road side, as spend a day in my company."

A deep sigh followed; but its pathos was drowned in the obstreperous ha, ha! ha! of her joyous helpmate, as he bounced into the room, wiping his forehead.

"Why, May, my dear, what have you been

about to-day: things have been all going to the deuce. Why didn't you hinder these boys from sweein' the gate off its hinges, and—"

"Me hinder boys from sweein' gates, Mr. Gawffaw! Do I look as if I was capable of hindering boys from sweein' gates, Miss Douglas?"

"Well my dear, you ought to lok after your pigs a little better. That jade, black Jess, has trod a parcel of them to death, ha, ha, ha! and—"

"Me look after pigs, Mr. Gawffaw! I'm really astonished at you!" again interrupted the lady, turning pale with vexation. Then, with an affected giggle, appealing to Mary, "I leave you to judge, Miss Douglass, if I look like a person made for running after pigs!"

"Indeed," thought Mary, "you don't look as if you could do any thing half so useful."

"Well, never mind the pigs, my dear; only don't give us any of them for dinner—ha, ha, ha!—and, May, when will you let us have it?"

"Me let you have it, Mr. Gawffaw! I'm sure I don't hinder you from having it when you please, only you know I prefer late hours myself. I was always accustomed to them in my poor father's life time—he never dined before four o'clock; and I seldom knew what it was to be in my bed before twelve o'clock at night, Miss Douglas, till I married Mr. Gawffaw!"

Mary tried to look sorrowful to hide the smile that was dimpling her cheek.

"Come let us have something to eat in the meantime, my dear."

"I'm sure you may eat the house, if you please, for me, Mr. Gawffaw! what would you take, Miss Douglas!—but pull the bell—Softly, Mr. Gawffaw! you do every thing so violently."

A dirty maid-servant, with bare feet, answered the summons.

"Where's Tom!" demanded the lady, well

knowing that Tom was afar off at some of the farm operations.

"I ken nae whar he's. He'll be aether at the patatees, or the horses, I'se warran. Div ye want him?"

"Bring some glasses," said her mistress, with an air of great dignity. "Mr. Gawffaw, you must see about the wine yourself, since you have sent Tom out of the way."

Mr. Gawffaw and his handmaid were soon heard in an adjoining closet; the one wondering where the screw was, the other vociferating for a knife to cut the bread; while the mistress of this well regulated mansion sought to divert her guests' attention from what was passing, by entertaining them with complaints of Mr Gawffaw's noise, and her maid's insolence, till the parties appeared to speak for themselves.

After being refreshed with some very bad wine, and old baked bread, the getlemen set off on a survey of the farm, and the ladies repaired to their toilettes. Mary's simple dress was quickly adjusted; and, upon descending, she found her uncle alone in what Mrs. Gawffaw had shown to her as the drawing-room. He guessed her curiosity to know something of her hosts; and therefore briefly informed her that Mrs. Gawffaw was the daughter of a trader in some manufacturing town, who had lived in opulence, and died insolvent. During his life, his daughter had eloped with Bob Gawffaw, then a gay lieutenant in a marching regiment, who had been esteemed a very lucky fellow in getting the pretty Miss Croaker, with the prospect of ten thousand pounds. None thought more highly of her husbands good fortune than the lady herself; and though *her* fortune never was realized, she gave herself all the airs of having been the making of his. At this time Mr. Gawffaw was a reduced lieutenant, living upon a small paternal property,

which he pretended to farm: but the habits of a bachelor's life, joined to a naturally social disposition, were rather inimical to the pursuits of agriculture, and most of his time was spent in loitering about the village of G. where he generally contrived either to pick up a guest, or procure a dinner.

Mrs. Gawffaw despised her husband; had weak nerves and headachs—was above managing her house—read novels—died ribbons—and altered her gowns according to every pattern she could see or hear of.

Such were Mr. and Mrs. Gawffaw—one of the many ill assorted couples in this world—joined, not matched. A sensible man would have curbed her folly and peevishness: A good tempered woman would have made his home comfortable, and rendered him more domestic.

The dinner was such as might have been expected from the previous specimens—bad of its kind, cold ill dressed, and slovenly set down: but Mrs. Gawffaw seemed satisfied with herself and it.

"This is very fine mutton, Mr. Douglas, and not under done to most people's tastes—and this fowl I have no doubt will eat well, Miss Douglas—though it is not so white as some I have seen."

"The fowl, my dear, looks as if it had been the great grandmother of this sheep, ha, ha, ha!"

"For heaven's sake, Mr. Gawffaw, make less noise or my head will split in a thousand pieces!" putting her hands to it, as if to hold the frail tenement together. This was always her refuge when at a loss for a reply.

A very ill concocted pudding next called forth her approbation.

"This pudding should be good; for it is the same I used to be so partial to in my poor father's

life time! when I was used to every delicacy, Miss Douglas, that money could purchase."

"But you thought me the greatest delicacy of all, my dear, ha, ha, ha! for you left all your other delicacies for me, ha, ha, ha!—what do you say to that May,? ha, ha, ha!"

May's reply consisted in putting her hands to her head, with an air of inexpressible vexation; and finding all her endeavours to be elegant frustrated by the overpowering vulgarity of her husband, she remained silent during the remainder of the repast; solacing herself with complacent glances at her yellow silk gown, and adjusting the gold chains and necklaces that adorned her bosom.

Poor Mary was doomed to a *tete a tete* with her during the whole evening; for Mr. Gawffaw was too happy *with* his friend, and *without* his wife, to quit the dining-room till a late hour; and then he was so much exhilarated, that she could almost have joined Mrs. Gawffaw in her exclamation of "For heaven's sake, Mr. Gawffaw, have mercy on my head!"

The night, however, like all other nights, had a close; and Mrs. Gawffaw, having once more enjoyed the felicity of finding herself in company at twelve o'clock at night, at length withdrew; and having apologised, and hoped, and feared, for another hour in Mary's appartment, she finally left her to the blessings of solitude and repose.

As Mr. Douglas was desirous of reaching Edinburgh the following day, he had, in spite of the urgent remonstrances of his friendly host, and the elegant importunities of his lady, ordered the carriage at an early hour; and Mary was too eager to quit Howffend to keep it waiting. Mr. Gawffaw was in readiness to hand her in, but fortunately Mrs. Gawffaw's head did not permit of her rising. With much the same hearty laugh that had welcomed their meeting, honest Gawffaw now

the departure of his friend; and as he went musing over his gate, he ruminated sweet and bitter thoughts as to the destinies of the day—whether he should solace himself with a good dinner, and the company of Bailie Merrythought, at the Cross Keys in G., or put up with cold mutton and Mag, at home.

CHAPTER XXXII.

"Edina! Scotia's darling seat!
All hail thy palaces and tow'rs,
Where once, beneath a monarch's feet,
Sat legislations sov'reign pow'rs!"

BURNS.

ALL Mary's sensations of admiration were faint, compared to those she experienced as she viewed the Scottish metropolis. It was associated in her mind, with all the local prepossessions to which youth and enthusiasm love to give "a local habitation and a name;" and visions of older times floated o'er her mind, as she gazed on its rocky battlements, and traversed the lonely arcades of its deserted palace.

"And this was once a gay court!" thought she, as she listened to the dreary echo of her own footsteps; "and this very ground on which I now stand was trod by the hapless Mary Stuart! Her eye beheld the same objects that mine now rests upon; her hands has touched the draperies I now hold in mine. These frail memorials remain: but what remains of Scotland's Queen but a blighted name!"

Even the blood-stained chamber possessed a nameless charm for Mary's vivid imagination. She had not entirely escaped the superstitions of the country in which she had lived; and she readily yielded her assent to the asservations of her guide, as to its being the *bona fide* blood of *David Rizzio*,

which, for nearly three hundred years, had resisted all human efforts to efface.

"My credulity is so harmless," said she in answer to her uncle's attempt to laugh her out of her belief, "that I surely may be permitted to indulge it—especially since, I confess, I feel a sort of indescribable pleasure in it."

"You take a pleasure in the sight of blood!" exclaimed Mr. Douglas in astonishment, "you who turn pale at sight of a cut finger, and shudder at a leg of mutton with the juice in it!"

"Oh! mere modern vulgar blood is very shocking," answered Mary with a smile; "but observe how this is mellowed by time into a tint that could not offend the most fastidious fine lady; besides," added she in a graver tone, "I own I love to believe in things supernatural; it seems to connect us more with another world, than when every thing is seen to proceed in the more ordinary course of nature, as it is called. I cannot bear to imagine a dreary chasm betwixt the inhabitants of this world and beings of a higher sphere; I love to fancy myself surrounded by——"

"I wish to heaven you would remember you are surrounded by rational beings, and not fall into such rhapsodies." said her uncle, glancing at a party, who stood near them, jesting upon all the objects which Mary had been regarding with so much veneration. "But, come, you have been long enough here. Let us try whether a breeze on the Calton Hill will not dispel these cobwebs from your brain."

The day, though cold, was clear and sunny; and the lovely spectacle before them shone forth in all its gay magnificence. The blue waters lay calm and motionless. The opposite shores glowed in a thousand varied tints of wood and plain, rock and mountain, cultured field, and purple moor. Beneath, the old town reared its dark brow, and

the new one stretched its golden lines; while all around, the varied charms of nature lay scattered in that profusion, which nature's hand alone can bestow.

"Oh! this is exquisite!" exclaimed Mary after a long pause, in which she had been rivetted in admiration of the scene before her. "And you are in the right, my dear uncle. The ideas which are inspired by the contemplation of such a spectacle as this, are far—oh how far!—superior to those excited by the mere works of art. There, I can at best, think but of the inferior agents of Providence: Here, the soul rises from nature up to nature's God."

"Upon my soul, you will be taken for a methodist, Mary, if you talk in this manner," said Mr. Douglas, with some marks of disquiet, as he turned round at the salutation of a fat elderly gentleman, whom he presently recognized as Bailie Broadfoot.

The first salutations over, Mr. Douglas' fears of Mary having been overheard recurred, and he felt anxious to remove any unfavourable impression with regard to his own principles, at least, from the mind of the enlightened magistrate.

"Your fine views here have set my niece absolutely raving," said he with a smile; "but I tell her it is only in romantic minds that fine scenery inspires romantic ideas. I dare say many of the worthy inhabitants of Edinburgh walk here with no other idea than that of sharpening their appetites for dinner."

"Nae doot," said the Bailie, "it's a most capital place for that. Were it no' for that, I ken nai muckle use it would be of."

"You speak from experience of its virtues in that respect, I suppose?" said Mr. Douglas gravely.

"'Deed, as to that I canna compleen. At times, to

be sure, I am troubled with a little kind of a squeamishness after our public interteenments; but three rounds o' the the hill sets a' to rights."

Then observing Mary's eyes exploring, as he supposed, the town of Leith, "You see that prospect to nae advantage the day, Miss," said he. "If the glass-houses had been workin', it would have looked as weel again. Ye hae nae glass-houses in the Highlands; na, na."

The Bailie had a share in the concern: and the volcanic clouds of smoke that issued from thence were far more interesting subjects of speculation to him than all the eruptions of Vesuvius or Etna. But there was nothing to charm the lingering view to-day; and he therefore proposed their taking a look at Bridewell, which, next to the smoke from the glass-houses, he reckoned the object most worthy of notice. It was indeed, deserving of the praises bestowed upon it; and Mary was giving her whole attention to the details of it, when she was suddenly startled by hearing her own name wailed in piteous accents from one of the lower cells, and upon turning round, she discovered in the prisoner the son of one of the tenants of Glenfern. Duncan M'Free had been always looked upon as a very honest lad in the Highlands, but he had left home to push his fortune as a pedlar; and the temptations of the low country having proved too much for his virtue, poor Duncan was now expiating his offence in durance vile.

"I shall have a pretty account of you to carry to Glenfern," said Mr. Douglas, regarding the culprit with his sternest look.

"O deed, Sir, it's no' my faut!" answered Duncan blubbering bitterly; "but there's nae freedom at a' in this country. Lord, an' I war oot o't! Ane canna ca' their head their ain in't: for ye canna lift the bouk o' a prin, but theyr'e a' upon ye." And a fresh burst of sorrows ensued.

Finding the *peccadillo* was of a venial nature, Mr. Douglas besought the Balie to use his interest to procure the enfranchisement of this his vassal, which Mr. Broadfoot, happy to oblige a good customer promised should be obtained on the following day; and Duncan's emotions being rather clamorous, the party found it necessary to withdraw.

"And noo," said the Bailie, as they emerged from this place of dole and durance, "will ye step up to the monument, and tak a rest and sowe refreshment?"

"Rest and refreshment in a monument!" exclaimed Mr. Douglas. "Excuse me, my good friend, but we are not inclined to bait there yet a while."

The Bailie did not comprehend the joke; and he proceeded in his own drawling humdrum accent, to assure them, that the monument was a most convenient place.

"It was erected in honour of Lord Neilson's memory," said he, "and is let aff to a pastry cook and confectioner, where you can always find some trifles to treat the ladies, such as pies and custards, and berries, and these sort of things: but we passed an order in the cooncil, that there should be naething of a spirituous nature introduced; for if ance spirits got admittance, there's no saying what might happen."

This was a fact which none of the party were disposed to dispute; and the Bailie, triumphing in his dominion over the spirits, shuffled on before to do the honours of this place, appropriated at one and the same time to the manes of a hero, and the making of minced pies. The regale was admirable, and Mary could not help thinking times were improved, and that it was a better thing to eat tarts in Lord Nelson's Monument, than to have been poisoned in Julius Cæsar's.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

"Having a tongue rough as a cat, and biting like an adder, and all their sermons are direct scoldings, their common intercourse is open contumely."

J. HENRY TAYLOR.

"THOUGH last, not least of nature's works, I must now introduce you to a friend of mine," said Mr. Douglas, as the Bailie having made his bow, they bent their steps towards the Castle Hill. "Mrs. Violet Mackshake is an aunt of my mother's whom you must often have heard of, and the last remaining branch of the noble race of Girnachgowl."

"I am afraid she is rather a formidable person, then?" said Mary.

Her uncle hesitated—"No, not formidable—only rather particular, as all old people are: but she is very good hearted."

"I understand, in other words, she is very disagreeable. All ill-tempered people, I observe, have the character of being good-hearted; or else all good people are ill-tempered. I can't tell which."

"It is more than reputation with her," said Mr. Douglas, somewhat angrily; "for she is, in reality, a very good hearted woman, as I experienced when a boy at college. Many a crown piece, and half-guinea I used to get from her. Many a scold to be sure went along with them; but that, I daresay, I deserved. Besides, she is very rich, and I am her reputed heir; therefore gratitude and self-interest combine to render her extremely amiable in my estimation."

They had now reached the airy dwelling where Mrs. Mackshake resided, and having rung, the door was at length most deliberately opened, by an

ancient, sour visaged, long waisted female, who ushered them into an apartment, the *coup d'œil* of which struck a chill to Mary's heart. It was a good sized room, with a bare sufficiency of small legged dining tables, and lank haircloth chairs, ranged in high order round the walls. Although the season was advanced, and the air piercing cold, the grate stood smiling in all the charms of polished steel; and the mistress of the mansion was seated by the side of it in an arm chair, still in its summer position. She appeared to have no other occupation than what her own meditations afforded; for a single glance sufficed to show, that not a vestige of book or work was harboured there. She was a tall, large boned woman, whom even Time's iron hand scarcely bent, as she merely stooped at the shoulders. She had a drooping snuffy nose—a long turned up chin—small quick grey eyes, and her face projected far beyond her figure, with an expression of shrewd restless curiosity. She wore a mode, (not *a-la-mode*) bonnet, and cardinal of the same; a pair of clogs over her shoes, and black silk mittens on her arms.

As soon as she recognized Mr. Douglass, she welcomed him with much cordiality, shook him long and heartily by the hand—patted him on the back—looked into his face with much seeming satisfaction; and in short, gave all the demonstrations of gladness usual with gentlewomen of a certain age. Her pleasure, however, appeared to be rather an *impromptu* than an habitual feeling; for as the surprise wore off, her visage resumed its harsh and sarcastic expression, and she seemed eager to efface any agreeable impression her reception might have excited.

"An wha thought o' seein ye enow," said she, in a quick gabbling voice; "what's brought you to the toon? are you come to spend your honest father's siller, e'er he's weel cauld in his grave, puir man."

[illegible] was upon account

[illegible] a sardonic smile. [illegible] hear the wark that's [illegible] noo-a-days. I [illegible] grasping Mary's [illegible] Ingland for ye're [illegible] what cam o' the [illegible] hame? And [illegible] ere leive to see [illegible] he!

Mary [illegible] the mirth the [illegible] had excited, join- [illegible] the laugh.

"Lass! lass! [illegible] let me see ye're [illegible] wi' that snule [illegible] ye're head." Then after taking an accurate survey of her face, she pushed aside her pelisse—"Weel, it's nae mercy, I see ye hae neither the [illegible] the Douglases. I [illegible] them or no. I [illegible] nor his braw [illegible] their while to speer after [illegible] accounts.

"You have not asked after any of your Glenfern friends," said Mr. Douglas, hoping to touch a more sympathetic chord.

"Time eneugh—wull ye let me draw my breath man—fowk canna say aw thing at ance. An ye bate to hae an Inglish wife tu, a Scotch lass wad nae serr ye—An ye're wean. I'se warran', it's ane o' the warld's wonders—it's been unca lang o' cummin—he, he!"

"He has begun life under very melancholy auspices, poor fellow!" said Mr. Douglas, in allusion to his father's death.

"An wha's faut was that? I ne'er heard tell the like o't, to hae the bairn kirsened an' its grandfather deein!—But fowk are naither born, nor kir-

sened, nor do they wad or dee as they used to du—aw thing's changed."

"You must indeed have witnessed many changes," observed Mr. Douglas, rather at a loss how to utter any thing of a conciliatory nature.

"Changes! weel a waat. I sometimes wunder if it's the same waurld, an if it's my ain heed that's upon my shoothers."

"But with these changes you must also have seen many improvements? said Mary, in a tone of diffidence.

"Impruvements!" turning sharply round upon her, "what ken ye aboot impruvements, bairn? A bony impruvement or ens no to see tyleyors and sclaters leavin, whar I mind Jewks and Yerls—An that great glowrin new toon there," pointing out of her windows, "whar I used to sit an luck oot at bonny green parks, and see the coos milket, and the bits o' bairnys rowin an' tummlin, an' the lasses trampin i' their tubs—What see I noo, but stane an lime, an stoor an dirt, an idle cheels, an dinket-oot madams prancin'.—Impruvements indeed!"

Mary found she was not likely to advance her uncle's fortune by the judiciousness of her remarks, therefore prudently resolved to hazard no more. Mr. Douglas, who was more *au fait* to the prejudices of old age, and who was always amused with her bitter remarks, when they did not touch himself, encouraged her to continue the conversation by some observation on the prevailing manners.

"Mainars!" repeated she, with a contemptuous laugh, "what caw ye mainars noo, for I dinna ken; ilk ane gangs bang in till their neebor's hoose, and bang oo't o't as it war a chynge hoose; an as for the maister o't, he no o' sae muckle vaalu as the flunky ahint his chyre. I' my grandfather's time, as I hae heard him tell, ilka maister o' a faamily had his ain sate in his ane hoose aye, an sat wi' his hat on his heed afore the best o' the land, an had his ain dish, an was aye helpit first, an keepit up his

authority as a man sude du. Paurents war paurents then—bairnes dardna set up their gabs afore them than as they du noo. They ne'er presumed to say their heads war their ain i' thae days—wife an servants—reteeners an' childer, au trummelt in the presence o' their heed"

Here a long pinch of snuff caused a pause in the old lady's harangue: but after having duly wiped her nose with her coloured handkerchief, and shook off all the particles that might be presumed to have lodged upon her cardinal, she resumed—

"An nae word o' ony o' your sisters gawn to get husbands yet? They tell me they're but coorse lasses: an' wha'll tak ill-farred tocherless queans, when there's walth o' bonny faces an' lang purses i' the market—he, he!" Then resuming her scrutiny of Mary—"An' I'se warren ye'll be lucken for an Inglish sweetheart tu; that'll be what's takin ye awa to Ingland."

"On the contrary," said Mr. Douglas, seeing Mary was too much frightened to answer for herself—"On the contrary, Mary declares she will never marry any but a true Highlander; one who wears the dirk and plaid; and has the second sight. And the nuptials are to be celebrated with all the pomp of feudal times; with bagpipes, and bonfires, and gatherings of clans, and roasted sheep, and barrels of whisky, and ——"

"Weel a wat an' she's i' the right there," interrupted Mrs. Macshake, with more complacency than she had yet shewn.—"They may caw them what they like, but there's nae waddins noo. Wha's the better o' them but innkeepers and chise-drivers? I wud nae count mysel married i' the hiddlins way they gang aboot it noo."

"I daresay you remember these things done in a very different style?" said Mr. Douglas.

"I dinna mind them when they war at the best; but I hae heard my mither tell what a bonny ploy was at her waddin. I canna tell ye hoo mony was

at it; mair nor the room wad haud, ye may be sure, for every relation an' freend o' baith sides war there, as well they sud; an' aw in full dress; the leddies in their hoops round them, an' some o' them had sutten up aw night till hae their heads drest; for they hadnae thae pooket-like taps ye hae noo," looking with contempt at Mary's Grecian contour. "An' the bride's goon was aw shewed ow'r wi' favors, frae the tap doon to the tail, an aw roond the neck, an' aboot the sleeves; and, as soon as the ceremony was ow'r, ilk ane ran till her an' rugget an' rave at her for the favors, till they hardly left the claise upon her back. Than they did nae run awa as they du noo, but sax an' thretty o' them set doon till a grand denner, and there was a ball at night, an' ilka night till Sabbath came roond; an' then the bride an the the bridegroom drest in their waddin suits, and aw their friends in theirs, wi' their favors on their breests, walkit in procession till the kirk. An' was nae that something like a waddin? It was worth while to be married i' thae days—He, he!"

"The wedding seems to have been admirably conducted," said Mr. Douglas, with much solemnity. "The christening I presume would be the next distinguished event in the family?"

"Troth, Archie—an' ye sude keep your thoomb upon kirsnins as lang's ye leeve; your's was a bonnie kirsnin or ens no! I hae heard o' mony things but a bairn kirsened when its grandfaither was i' the deed-thraw, I ne'er heard tell o' before." Then observing the indignation that spread over Mr. Douglas' face, she quickly resumed, "An so ye think the kirsnin was the neist ploy?—He, he! Na; the cryin was a ploy, for the leddies did nae keep themsels up than as they du noo; but the day after the bairn was born, the leddy sat up i' her bed, wi' her fan intill her hand; an aw her freends cam an' stud roond her, an drank her health an the bairn's. Than at the leddy's recovery, there was a graund

supper gien that they caw'd the *cummerfealls*, an there was a great pyramid o' hens at the tap o' the table, an anither pyramid o' ducks at the fit, an a muckle stoup fu' o' posset i' the middle, an aw kinds o' sweeties doon the sides; an as soon as ilk ane had eatin their fill, they aw flew till the sweetys, an faught an strave, an wrastled for them, leddies an gentlemen an aw; for the brag was, wha could pocket maist; an whiles they wad hae the claith aff the table, an aw thing i' the middle i' the floor, an the chyres upside doon. Oo! muckle good diversion, I'se warran, was at the *cummerfeals*—Then when they had drank the stoup dry, that ended the ploy. As for the kirsnin, that was aye whar it sude be—i' the hoos o' God, an aw the kith an kin bye in full dress, an a band o' maiden cimmers aw in white; an a bonny sight it was, as I've heard my mither tell."

Mr. Douglas, who was now rather tired of the old lady's reminiscences, availed himself of the opportunity of a fresh pinch, to rise and take leave.

Oo, what's takin ye awa, Archie, in sic a hurry? Sit doon there," laying her hand upon his arm "an rest ye, an tak a glass o' wine, an a bit o' breed; or may be," turning to Mary, "ye wad rather hae a drap broth to warm ye. What gars ye luck sae blae, bairn? I'm sure its na cauld; but ye're just like the lave: ye gang aw skiltin aboot the streets half naked, an' then you must sit an birsle yoursels afore the fire at hame."

She had now shuffled along to the further end of the room, and opening a press, took out wine, and a plateful of various shaped articles of bread, which she handed to Mary.

"Hae bairn---tak a cookie---tak it up---what are you fear'd for?—it'll no bite ye. Here's t'ye, Glenfern, an your wife, an your wean, puir tead, its no had a very chancy ootset, weel a wat."

The wine being drank, and the cookies discussed, Mr. Douglas made another attempt to withdraw, *but in* vain.

"Canna ye sit still a wee, man, an' let me spear after my auld freens at Glenfern. Hoo's Grizzy, an' Jacky, and Nicky?—aye workin away at the pills an' the drogs—he, he! I ne'er swallowed a pill, nor gied a doit for drogs aw my days, an see an ony of them 'll rin a race wi' me whan they're naur five score."

Mr. Douglas here paid her some compliments upon her appearance, which were pretty graciously received; and added that he was the bearer of a letter from his aunt Grizzy, which, he would send along with a roebuck and brace of moor-game.

"Gin your roebuck's nae better than your last, atweel its no worth the sendin': poor dry fisinless dirt, no worth the chowing: weel a wot, I begrudged my teeth on't. Your muir-fowl was na that ill, but they're no worth the carryin; they're dong cheap i' the market enoo, so its nae great compliment. Gin ye had brought me a leg o' gude mutton, or a cauler sawmont, there would hae been some sense in't; but ye're ane o' the fowk that 'll neer harry yoursel wi' your presents: it's but the pickle poother they cost you, an' I'se warran ye're thinkin mair o' your ain diversion than o' my stamick, when ye're at the shootin' o' them, puir beasts."

Mr. Douglas had borne the various indignities levelled against himself and his family with a philosophy that had no parallel in his life before; but to this attack upon his game, he was not proof. His colour rose, his eyes flashed fire, and something resembling an oath burst from his lips, as he strode indignantly towards the door.

His friend however, was too nimble for him. She stepped before him, and, breaking into a discordant laugh, as she patted him on the back, "So I see ye're just the auld man Archie,—ay ready to tak the strums, an' ye dinna get a' thing ye're ain wye. Mony a time I had to fleech ye oot o' the dorts whan ye was a callant. Div ye mind hoo ye was affronted because I set ye doon to a cauld pigeon-pye, an' a

[illegible] manage [illegible]

Mr Douglas still [illegible] was irresolute whether [illegible]

[illegible] speak [illegible] adjoining [illegible] the size [illegible] Then pulling [illegible] took a pair [illegible] diamond ear-rings [illegible] [illegible] a hand [illegible] father's grave [illegible] She was a good [illegible] had four and twenty sons and daughters. [illegible] just to me is [illegible] But mind ye," [illegible] [illegible] thought [illegible] [illegible] met [illegible] [illegible] thanks." [illegible] again, "and [illegible] [illegible] Archie, [illegible] hard upon my [illegible] [illegible] hands and parted.

"[illegible] for you like Mrs Macshake, Mary?" [illegible] as they walked home.

"[illegible] a difficult question, uncle," answered she. "My gratitude and my taste are at [illegible]" [illegible] displaying her splendid gift, "that [illegible] reconcile them."

"[illegible] the case with those whom Mrs. [illegible]," returned Mr. Douglas: "[illegible] liberal things, but in so ungracious [illegible] that people are never sure whether [illegible] insulted by her. But the way [illegible] kindness is still worse. Could

any thing equal her impertinence about my roebuck? —Faith, I've a good mind never to enter her door again!"

Mary could scarcely preserve her gravity at her uncle's indignation, which seemed so disproportioned to the cause. But, to turn the current of his ideas, she remarked, that he had certainly been at pains to select two admirable specimens of her countrywomen for her.

"I don't think I shall soon forget either Mrs. Gawffaw or Mrs. Macshake," said she laughing.

"I hope you won't carry away the impression, that these two *lusus naturæ* are specimens of Scotch-women?" said her uncle. "The former, indeed, is rather a sort of weed that infests every soil—the latter, to be sure, is an indigenous plant. I question if she would have arrived at such perfection in a more cultivated field, or genial clime. She was born at a time when Scotland was very different from what it is now. Female education was little attended to, even in families of the highest rank; consequently, the ladies of those days possess a *raciness* in their manners and ideas that we should vainly seek for in this age of cultivation and refinement. Had your time permitted, you could have seen much good society here, superior, perhaps, to what is to be found any where else, as far as mental cultivation is concerned. But you will have leisure for that when you return."

Mary acquiesced with a sigh. *Return* was to her still a melancholy sounding word. It reminded her of all she had left—of the anguish of separation —the dreariness of absence; and all these painful feelings were renewed, in their utmost bitterness, when the time approached for her to bid adieu to her uncle. Lord Courtland's carriage, and two respectable looking servants, awaited her: and the following morning she commenced her journey, in all the agony of a heart that fondly clings to its native home.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

———"Nor only by the warmth
And soothing sunshine of delightful things,
Do minds grow up and flourish."

AKENSIDE.

AFTER parting with the last of her beloved relatives, Mary tried to think only of the happiness that awaited her in a re-union with her mother and sister; and she gave herself up to the blissful reveries of a young and ardent imagination. Mrs. Douglas had sought to repress, rather than excite, her sanguine expectations; but vainly is the experience of others employed in moderating the enthusiasm of a glowing heart—Experience *cannot* be imparted: We may render the youthful mind prematurely cautious, or meanly suspicious; but the experience of a pure and enlightened mind is the result of observation, matured by time.

The journey, like most modern journies, was performed in comfort and safety; and, late one evening, Mary found herself at the goal of her wishes—at the threshold of the house that contained her mother! One idea filled her mind; but that idea called up a thousand emotions.

"I am now to meet my mother!" thought she, and, unconscious of every thing else she was assisted from the carriage, and conducted into the house. A door was thrown open; but shrinking from the glare of light and sound of voices that assailed her, she stood dazzled and dismayed, till she beheld a figure approaching that she guessed to be her mother. Her heart beat violently—a film was upon her eyes—she made an effort to reach her mother's arms, and sunk lifeless on her bosom!

Lady Juliana, for such as it was, doubted not but that her daughter was *really* dead; for though

she talked of fainting every hour of the day herself, still what is emphatically called a *dead-faint*, was a spectacle no less strange than shocking to her. She was, therefore, sufficiently alarmed and overcome to behave in a very interesting manner; and some yearnings of pity even possessed her heart, as she beheld her daughter's lifeless form extended before her—her beautiful, though inanimate features, half hid by the profusion of golden ringlets that fell around her. But these kindly feelings were of short duration; for no sooner was the nature of her daughter's insensibility ascertained, than all her former hostility returned, as she found every one's attention directed to Mary and she herself entirely overlooked in the general interest she had excited; and her displeasure was still further increased, as Mary, at length slowly unclosing her eyes, stretched out her hands, and faintly articulated, "My mother!"

"Mother! What a hideous vulgar appellation!" thought the fashionable parent to herself; and, instead of answering her daughter's appeal, she hastily proposed that she should be conveyed to her own apartment: then, summoning her maid, she consigned her to her care, slightly touching her cheek as she wished her good night, and returned to the card table. Adelaide too resumed her station at the harp as if nothing had happened; but Lady Emily attended her cousin to her room—embraced her again and again, as she assured her she loved her already, she was so like her dear Edward: then, after satisfying herself that every thing was comfortable, affectionately kissed her, and withdrew.

Bodily fatigue got the better of mental agitation; and Mary slept soundly, and awoke refreshed.

"Can it be," thought she, as she tried to collect her bewildered thoughts, "can it be that I really beheld my mother—that I have been pressed to her heart—that she has shed tears over me while I lay

unconscious in her arms?—Mother! What a delightful sound; and how beautiful she seemed! yet I have no distinct idea of her, my head was so confused; but I have a vague recollection of something very fair, and beautiful, and seraph-like covered with silver drapery, and flowers, and with the sweetest voice in the world.—Yet that must be too young for my mother—Perhaps it was my sister; and my mother was too much overcome to meet her stranger child. Oh! how happy must I be with such a mother and sister!"

In these delightful cogitations Mary remained till Lady Emily entered.

"How well you look this morning, my dear cousin," said she, flying to her; "you are much more like my Edward than you were last night, Ah! and you have got his smile too! You must let me see that often."

"I am sure I shall have cause," said Mary, returning her cousin's affectionate embrace, "but at present I feel anxious about my mother and sister. The agitation of our meeting, and my weakness, I fear has been too much for them;" and she looked earnestly in Lady Emily's face for a confirmation of her fears.

"Indeed, you need be under no uneasiness on their account," returned her cousin, with her usual bluntness, "their feelings are not so easily disturbed; you will see both at breakfast, so come along."

The room was empty: and again Mary's sensitive heart trembled for the welfare of those already so dear to her; but Lady Emily did not appear to understand the nature of her feelings.

"Have a little patience, my dear!" said she, with something of an impatient tone, as she rung for breakfast, "they will be here at their usual time. Nobody in this house is a slave to hours, or *gene* with each others society. Liberty is the motto here; every body breakfasts when and where they *please*. Lady Juliana, I believe, frequently takes

her's in her dressing-room; Papa never is visible till two or three o'clock; and Adelaide is always late."

"What a selfish cold-hearted thing is grandeur!" thought Mary, as Lady Emily and she sat like two specks in the splendid saloon, surrounded by all that wealth could purchase, or luxury invent: and her thoughts reverted to the pious thanksgiving, and affectionate meeting that graced their social meal in the sweet sunny parlour at Lochmarlie.

Some of those airy nothings, without a local habitation, who are always to be found flitting about the mansions of the great, now lounged into the room; and soon after Adelaide made her *entree* Mary, trembling violently, was ready to fall upon her sister's neck; but Adelaide seemed prepared to repel every thing like a *scene;* for, with a cold, but sweet, "I hope you are better this morning?" she seated herself at the opposite side of the table. Mary's blood rushed back to her heart—her eyes filled with tears, she knew not why: for she could not analyse the feelings that swelled in her bosom. She would have shuddered to *think* her sister unkind, but she *felt* she was so.

"It can only be the difference of our manners," sighed she to herself; "I am sure my sister loves me, though she does not show it in the same way I should have done;" and she gazed with the purest admiration and tenderness on the matchless beauty of her face and form. Never had she beheld any thing so exquisitely beautiful; and she longed to throw herself into her sister's arms, and tell her how she loved her. But Adelaide seemed to think the present company wholly unworthy of her regard: for, after having received the adulation of the gentlemen, as they severally paid her a profusion of compliments upon her appearance, "Desire Tomkins," said she to a footman, "to ask Lady Juliana for the 'Morning Post,' and the second volume of 'Le——,' of the French novel I

[illegible] shall have it again when [illegible]

[illegible] people may express [illegible] thought Mary [illegible] had I been [illegible] my mother, I should have ex[illegible] no doubt my [illegible] the same, though she may not [illegible]

[illegible] with the newspaper, and [illegible] found.

[illegible] any body else," [illegible] books. [illegible] two last novels [illegible] seen them."

[illegible] one ima[illegible] a par[illegible]

[illegible] more puzzled.

[illegible] thought [illegible] pleasure: [illegible] praise. [illegible] judge [illegible]

[illegible] three or [illegible] La [illegible] with [illegible] Again Mary [illegible] a variety of powerful [illegible] but, pale and [illegible] in her chair.

H[illegible] by her mother, who did [illegible] to be sensible of her presence: for, with a graceful bend of her head to the company in general, she approached Adelaide, and putting her lips to her forehead. "How do you do, love? I am afraid you are very angry with me, about that teazing La ——. I can't conceive where it can be: but here is the third volume which is much prettier than the second."

"I certainly shall not read the third volume before the second," said Adelaide with her usual serenity.

"Then I shall order another copy from town, my love; or I daresay I could tell you the story of the second volume: it is not at all interesting, I assure you. Hermilisde, you know—but I forgot where the first volume left off."—Then directing her eyes to Mary, who had summoned strength to rise, and was slowly venturing to approach her, she extended a finger towards her. Mary eagerly seized her mother's hand, and pressed it with fervour to her lips; then hid her face on her shoulder to conceal the tears that burst from her eyes.

"Absurd, my dear!" said her ladyship in a peevish tone, as she disengaged herself from her daughter; "you must really get the better of this foolish weakness; these *scenes* are too much for me. I was most excessively shocked last night, I assure you, and you ought not to have quitted your room to-day."

Poor Mary's tears congealed in her eyes at this tender salutation; and she raised her head, as if to ascertain whether it really proceeded from her mother; but instead of the angelic vision she had pictured to herself, she beheld a face which, though once handsome, now conveyed no pleasurable feeling to her heart.

Late hours, bad temper, and rouge, had done much to impair Lady Juliana's beauty. There still remained enough to dazzle a superficial observer; but not to satisfy the eye used to the expression of all the best affections of the soul. Mary almost shrank from the peevish inanity portrayed on her mother's visage, as a glance of the mind contrasted it with the mild eloquence of Mrs. Douglas' countenance; and, abashed and disappointed, she remained mournfully silent.

"Where is Dr. Redgill!" demanded Lady Juliana of the company in general.

"He has got scent of a turtle at Admiral Yellowchops," answered Mr. P.

"How vastly provoking," rejoined her lady-

ship, "that he should be out of the way the only time I have wished to see him since he came to the house!"

"Who is this favoured individual, whose absence you are so pathetically lamenting, Julia?" asked Lord Courtland, as he indolently sauntered into the room.

"That disagreeable Dr. Redgill. He has gone somewhere to eat turtle, at the very time I wished to consult him about—"

"The propriety of introducing a new niece to your Lordship," said Emily, as, with affected solemnity, she introduced Mary to her uncle. Lady Juliana frowned—the Earl smiled—saluted his niece—hoped she had recovered from the fatigue of the journey—remarked it was very cold; and then turning to a parrot, humming 'pretty Poll say,' &c.

Such was Mary's first introduction to her family; and those only who have felt what it was to have the genial current of their souls chilled by neglect, or changed by unkindness, can sympathise in the feelings of wounded affection—when the overflowings of a generous heart are confined within the narrow limits of its own bosom, and the offerings of love are rudely rejected by the hand most dear to us.

Mary was too much intimidated by her mother's manner towards her, to give way, in her presence, to the emotions that agitated her; but she followed her sister's steps as she quitted the room, and, throwing her arms around her, sobbed in a voice almost choked with the excess of her feelings, "My sister, love me!—oh! love me!" But Adelaide's heart seared by selfishness and vanity was incapable of loving any thing in which self had no share; and, for the first time in her life, she felt awkward and embarrassed. Her sister's streaming eyes and supplicating voice spoke a language to which she was a stranger; for art is ever averse to recognise the accents of nature. Still less is it capable of replying to them; and Adelaide could only won-

der at her sister's agitation, and think how unpleasant it was; and say something about overcome, and *eau-de-luce*, and composure; which was all lost upon Mary as she hung upon her neck, every feeling wrought to its highest tone by the complicated nature of those emotions which swelled her heart. At length making an effort to regain her composure "Forgive me, my sister," said she. "This is very foolish—to weep when I ought to rejoice—and I do rejoice—and I know I shall be so happy yet!" but in spite of the faint smile that accompanied her words, tears again burst from her eyes.

"I am sure I shall have infinite pleasure in your society," replied Adelaide, with her usual sweetness and placidity, as she replaced a ringlet in its proper position; "but I have unluckily an engagement at this time. You will, however, be at no loss for amusement; you will find musical instruments there," pointing to an adjacent apartment; "and here are new publications, and *porte feuilles* of drawings you will perhaps like to look over; and so saying, she disappeared.

"Musical instruments and new publications!" repeated Mary mechanically to herself: "what have I to do with them?—Oh!Oh! for one kind word from my mother's lips! one kind glance from my sister's eye!"

And she remained overwhelmed with the weight of those emotions, which instead of pouring into the hearts of others, she was compelled to concentrate in her own. Her mournful reveries were interrupted by her kind friend Lady Emily; but Mary deemed her sorrow too sacred to be betrayed even to her, and therefore rallying her spirits, she strove to enter into those schemes of amusement suggested by her cousin for passing the day. But she found herself unable for such continued exertion; and hearing a large party was expected to dinner, she retired in spite of Lady Emily's remonstrance, to her own apartment, where she sought a refuge

from her thoughts, in writing to her friends at Glenfern.

Lady Juliana looked in upon her as she passed to dinner. She was in a better humour, for she had received a new dress which was particularly becoming, as both her maid and her glass had attested.

Again Mary's heart bounded towards the being to whom she owed her birth; yet afraid to give utterance to her feelings, she could only regard her with silent admiration, till a moment's consideration converted that into a less pleasing feeling, as she observed for the first time, that her mother wore no mourning

Lady Juliana saw her astonishment, and, little guessing the cause, was flattered by it. "Your style of dress is very obsolete, my dear," said she, as she contrasted the effect of her own figure and her daughter's in a large mirror; "and there's no occasion for you to wear black here. I shall desire my woman to order some things for you: though perhaps there won't be much occasion, as your stay here is to be short; and of course, you won't think of going out at all. *Apropos*, you will find it dull here by yourself, won't you? I shall leave you my darling Blanche for a companion," kissing a little French lap-dog, as she laid it in Mary's lap; "only you must be very careful of her, and coax her, and be very, very good to her: for I would not have my sweetest Blanche vexed, not for the world!" And, with another long and tender salute to her dog, and a "good bye, my dear!" to her daughter, she quitted her to display her charms to a brilliant drawing room, leaving Mary to solace herself in her solitary chamber with the whines of a discontented lap-dog.

END OF VOL. I.

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